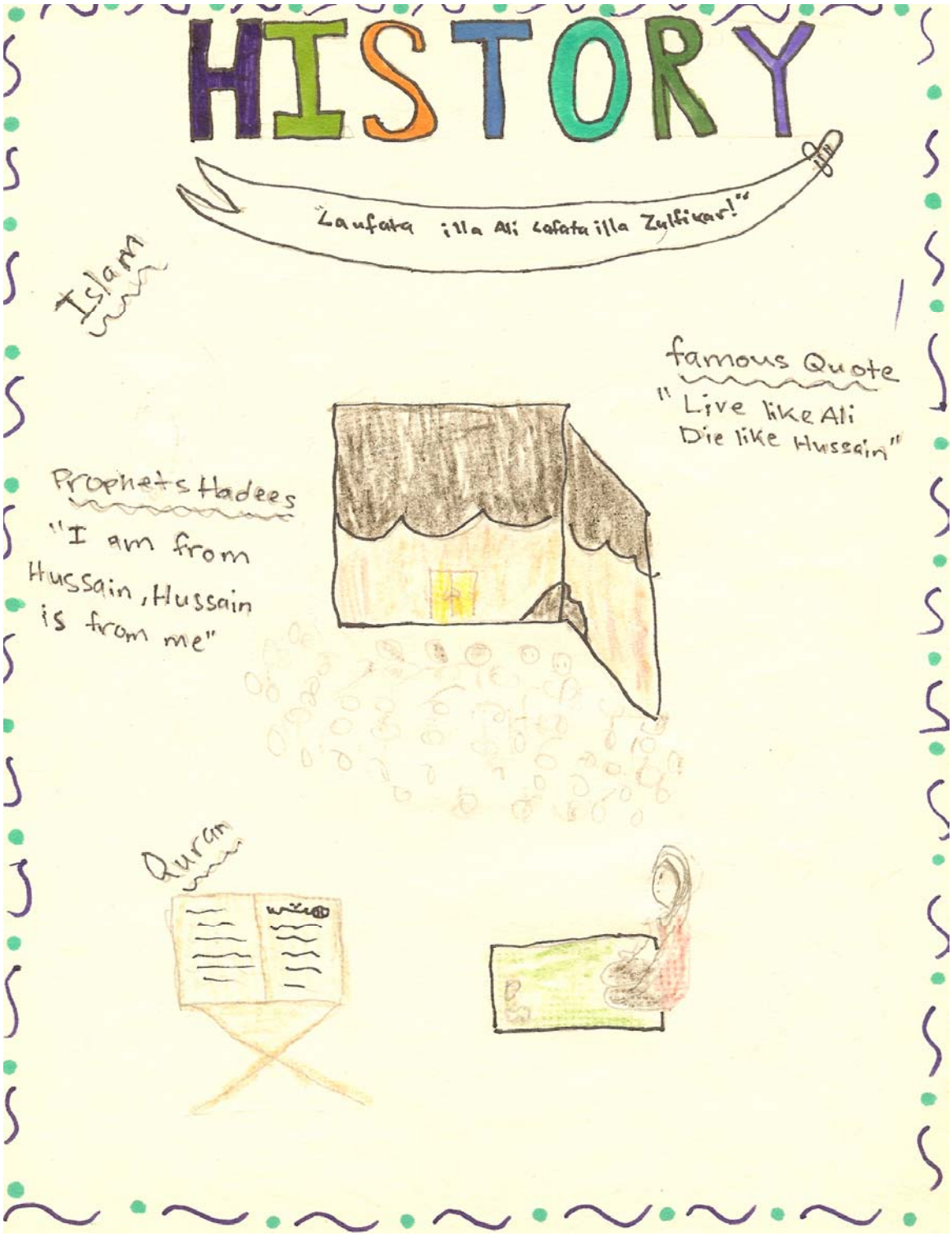
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait Islamic School

Grade 7 History



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In the Name of Allah the Most Gracious Most Merciful

Foreword

The material presented in this document is a result of an effort made by the personnel of the school of Ahlul'Bait of the Shia-Muslim Association of Bay Area Islamic Center at San Jose, California in cooperation with several schools of Ahlul'Bait at London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota and Toronto.

We, at San Jose, looked at material from London-Stanmore, London-Hujjat, Vancouver, Minnesota, Toronto and Irvine's Islamic institutions, as well as that available at various web-sites to compile age appropriate textbooks for use by our students. We thank the institutions that were kind enough to provide us with the electronic files of their curriculum. We used some of what they had and added to it what we felt was appropriate. We included more worksheets and pictures where deemed necessary. We also added some new topics that, we felt are important to the students.

We had two important goals in mind while working on this document. First, introduce the students to the important Islamic concepts and beliefs that are crucial for him/her to know. Second, expose the students to as many Quranic verses and sayings from Prophet Muhammad (p) and his Ahlul'Bait (a) as possible.

We thank Hujjatul Islam Maulana Nabi Raza Abidi for his spiritual guidance. We hope future efforts will continue taking place until reaching our goal of having a strong, rich and unified curriculum for the schools of Ahlul'Bait for all ages.

Syllabus Committee
Madrasat Ahlul'Bait

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Preface

This book starts with a short biography of Lady Fatemah (s) and then covers the entire period of Imam Ali's (a) life. In this book, history continues itself after the death of Prophet Muhammad (s). It therefore also covers the time period of the Caliphs after Prophet Muhammad (s). As in all the history books, there is also a section on Muharram that catches a glimpse of some of the greatest martyrs in the history of Islam.

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Section I: Islamic History

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Chapter 1: Biography of Fatemah Zahra (SA)

Looking back in history, most if not all the human societies considered women unimportant and irrelevant when it came to political and social events. Men were physically more aggressive therefore they dominated the society. Women were property of men. They could be purchased, mistreated, or killed just like animals.

This view was strongly challenged by the Prophet of Islam. Prophet Mohammad (PBUH) portrayed a woman as a human who has just the same social rights and freedom as a man. He held that view and acted upon it to the last day of his life. Unfortunately as much as he tried to change the ignorant, old views that were held by human cultures for centuries, many Muslim societies up to this date still treat women badly and not in accordance with Islamic laws. That is why when imperialism raised the slogan of women's freedom many women embraced it without having a real understanding of what it meant. Freedom that Western Imperialism offered allowed a woman to work in any kind of job, wear any kind of clothes, and behave in any manner that she liked. In other words she could hold jobs that were traditionally held by men. This was called freedom. Of course if a woman was driving a truck and was away from her home for days, she could not attend to the needs of her family but that was also freedom, free from family responsibilities!

The woman who used to be the slave of an ignorant, superstitious society now became slave of a greedy imperialistic society. Her previous condition was bad and her present condition is even worse because previously she was physically slaved and now she is mentally slaved. Before she knew that she had no freedom, now she thinks she is free where indeed she is a slave of a commercialized society that utilizes her as a commodity to feed its infinite appetite. Knowing all this, to escape both ways of life we need to understand real laws and codes of conduct for Muslim women. Have we ever had women in our history that we can use as a role model? The answer is "Yes" we have had a few very good role models such as: Lady Khadijah (S.A.), Fatemah (S.A.), and Zainab (S.A.). From being a businesswoman to politician they bravely walked through territories that were forbidden to women in their time. Each of these ladies performed an incredible role in their own time and left a remarkable print in history. Here is a brief life history of one of them.

Our Lady of Light was born on Friday the 20th of Jammadi Ussani. She was named Fatemah meaning separated and that is because her followers are separated from Hell because of her. She had many titles and nicknames the most famous one being Zahra means luminous. Imam Sadiq (A.S.) said:" *When Fatemah prayed, she shined for the Heavens as the stars shine for people on earth."*

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Most Shia and Sunni commentators believe that Surah Kawthar (Extreme Blessing) came down in connection with her birth.

The love of Fatemah for her father and vice versa was immense. Whenever Lady Fatemah (SA) arrived the Prophet (PBUH) would get up from his place, kiss her and make her sit next to himself. This was not only to show respect to her but also to set an example for Muslim men in their behavior toward Muslim women.
The Prophet (PBUH) used to say;" *Fatemah is a piece of me, whoever tortures her has tortured me, and whoever pleases her has pleased me*." One day he said to her;" *O Fatemah God gets pleased on you being pleased and gets furious due to your unhappiness*."

She was six years old when her mother Bibi Khadijah (SA) passed away. After the death of her mother she always looked after her father. Whenever the Prophet (PBUH) came home injured from harassing enemies she would wash the blood from his face, dress his wounds, and encouraged him with her sweet conversation. At such times when the Prophet was a stranger in his own land and was struggling against ignorance, it was Fatemah (SA) who strengthened his hopes. That is why the Prophet used to say:" May your father sacrifice his life upon you." He also called her " Mother of Her Father" because she was like a mother to her father.

Being brought up by her father, Fatemah (SA) not only adopted his graceful manner but also became well acquainted with Qur'an and religious laws.
Once she grew older, many men including Abu Bakr and Omar asked her hand in marriage. But the Prophet (PBUH) said*," I am waiting for revelation in this connection."*
The revelation came, God ordered," *Oh my Prophet get the Light (Noor) married to the Light"* i.e. Get Fatemah (SA) married to Ali (AS).

When Ali (AS) approached the Prophet (PBUH) to request the hand of Fatemah (SA) in marriage he had nothing from the wealth of the world. The Prophet (PBUH) asked Fatemah (SA) her opinion by saying;" Oh daughter you know fully well that Ali (AS) was the first ever faithful out of the lot. I had prayed to God, to give the best husband to you.

Therefore, God has selected Ali (AS) for your husband, so what is your opinion?" Fatemah (AS) remained silent. The father took her silence as the token of her being agreed and arranged the ceremony that was modest and not fancy. The Prophet told the couple that they were the best people for each other and sent them to their home that was eight kilometers from Medina where the Prophet (PBUH) had stayed on migration from Mecca and had waited a week for Ali (AS). But soon they moved back to Medina and resided in a house next to the Prophet's house because the father and daughter could not tolerate separation from each other. This is the same house of Ahlul Bait of purity and piety that is praised by the Holy Qur'an.

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The relationship between Fatemah (AS) and Ali (AS) is a perfect example for every Muslim couple. There was love and respect and from time to time differences of opinion but since both people followed the same set of rules (God's rules) their differences were settled in a rational way. To describe their relationship Imam Ali (AS) once said;" *I swear to Allah that I never made Fatemah angry and never ordered her to do something she did not like and she also never made me angry and never disobeyed me*."

The fruit of their marriage were four unique human beings, two boys and two girls. Although Fatemah (AS) was the daughter of the head of the state, she never acted like royalty. A lot of times she had no servants to help her with house chores and so from grinding the wheat to baking the bread and looking after the children she did herself. She never asked her husband for unworthy material possessions. Together they attended to the training of their children in a perfect manner. It is recorded that they never got angry with their children or said anything to hurt their feelings. She brought up her children in an environment full of love of Allah and respect for humanity. She and her husband were perfect role models for their children. During the Nights of Qadr in Ramadan Fatemah (AS) would feed the family a light meal and put away the beds to encourage them to stay up all night and offer prayers. This way she fed their souls as well as their bodies.
The night that the Prophet (PBUH) was in his death bed Fatemah (AS) kept his company while reciting Qur'an for him. Nothing was more soothing to him than listening to God's Words being recited by his best creature.

Fatemah (SA) never really got over the grief of her father's separation. As if what the Prophet (PBUH) said about them being a part of each other, was true in a spiritual sense. Besides the loss of her father she had another reason to grief. Her husband's right to be the next Caliph of the Muslim nation was taken away from him. She was clearly in shock over the fact that those who pretended to be the closest people to the Prophet (PBUH) were the first ones to ignore his orders. Coming back from his last Hajj the messenger of Allah clearly introduced Ali (AS) as his successor. Fatemah realized the unjust nature of the political decision that was made so she did not remain silent. She raised her voice in opposition to the appointment of Abu Bakr as the Caliph. Some Muslims who were brave enough to take the side of the truth gathered in Fatemah's house to show their objection to the appointment of Abu Bakr.

When Abu Bakr was chosen only by the people gathering in Saqifa, he sent Omar to Fatemah's (AS) house to bring in Imam Ali (AS) and others for swearing allegiance by force. Omar and others went there carrying fire with them. When he arrived there Fatemah (SA) came to the door and asked the reason for his coming. Omar said that he wanted to take Imam Ali (AS) and others by force. Fatemah (SA) prohibited him and others from doing that. Therefore some of the people following Omar dispersed but Omar who got angry threatened to put the house with all the people in it in fire. At this time people who had gathered in Fatemah's house exited the house. Omar followed them and broke some of their swords.

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But still Imam Ali (AS) and his family were inside. Omar put the door on fire and entered the house by force. He and his followers dragged Imam (AS) by force to the mosque where Abu Bakr was. During that traumatic event Fatemah (SA) who was pregnant at the time was injured nevertheless she went to the Mosque to defend her husband. She gave a fiery speech and warned Omar and Abu Bakr of Allah's anger and punishment.

Fatemah was also oppressed on Fadak after the Prophet's (PBUH) death. Fadak is a village 165 Kilometers from Medina that produced lots of date palms. Fadak belonged to the Jews but they granted it to the Prophet (PBUH). So it was considered "Anfal" which belongs to Allah and the Prophet (PBUH) as Holy Qur'an says. After the verse" Give your family their rights" came down, the Prophet (PBUH) granted Fadak to Fatemah (SA) as Allah had ordered. Imam Ali (AS) and Fatemah (SA) had some agents in Fadak who worked there and sent the income to them after the harvest. Fatemah (SA) gave the agent's a salary first and divided the remaining among the needy, although her living condition was so simple that sometimes She and her family granted their daily food and slept hungry. After the death of the Prophet (PBUH), Abu Bakr claimed that Prophet's inheritance belonged to all Muslims and took Fadak away from Fatemah (SA). Fatemah (SA) defended her right in two ways.

First, she introduced several people witnessing that the Prophet (PBUH) had granted Fadak to her as a gift when he was alive. So Fadak was not inheritance. Second, she brought several verses from Quran that showed Abu Bakr's claim to be invalid. Her speech was so logical that nobody was doubtful that Fadak belonged to her. However, it was not returned to her or her family until the time of Omar. But it was again usurped when Othman was Caliph.

Fatemah's terrible injury during Omar's attack to her home was taking a toll on her. She grew more ill every day. During the last days of her life Omar and Abu Bakr went to visit her. Although Fatemah (SA) rejected them first they insisted and finally managed to meet her. Then she reminded them of Prophet's (BPUH) statement:" Any one who makes Fatemah angry has made me angry and one who pleases her pleases me". They confirmed that saying. Then, she called Allah and angels to witness that they (Abu Bakr and Omar) had made her angry and never pleased her and she would clearly complain to the Prophet (PBUH) of them.

Just before her death she made requested that Imam Ali (AS) give her ghusl, shroud her, and bury her at night. She did not want any of the people who oppressed her to be present at her burial. It was third of Jamadi al thani, year eleven after Hijrah. Bibi Fatemah (SA) asked for some water. She washed herself, wore new clothes, and lay down in bed facing Kaaba. Soon the light of her existence was extinguished.

At the time of her sorrowful demise Imam Hassan (AS) was 7, Imam Hussein (AS) was 6, Zainab (SA) was 5, and Umme Kulsum (SA) was 3 years old. She herself was 18. Her death was in the same year as the Prophet (PBUH).

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Imam Ali (AS) did every thing according to her will. When ablution was finished he told Imam Hassan (AS) and Imam Hussein (AS) to notify some of Prophet's (PBUH) real companions whom Fatemah (SA) was satisfied with to participate in her burial ceremony (they were not more than 7). After they arrived, he said prayers and then buried her while their children were crying. When the burial ceremony ended Imam Ali (AS) turned to Prophet's (PBUH) shrine and said: Regards to you the messenger of Allah, I am returning to you that which you have entrusted me. Your daughter will inform you how your community oppressed her.

Today after passing many years, still her shrine is hidden and it will remain hidden until her son Imam Mahdi (AS) reappears. He will show us his mother's shrine, Inshallah. Peace be upon her pure soul.

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1.1 Worksheet: Biography of Fatemah Zahra (SA)

Choose the correct answer:

1. The Prophet of Islam challenged the view that women were

    a. Very professional
    b. Very weak
    c. All of the above
    d. Unimportant and irrelevant

2. In the past a woman knew that she had no freedom, now she *thinks* she is free where indeed she is a slave of a _____society.

    a. Scientific
    a. Commercialized
    b. Industrialized
    c. Democratized

3. One of Bibi Fatemah's (S) names, Zahra, means

    a. Happy
    b. Tortured
    c. Luminous
    d. Grief stricken

4. *Fatemah is a piece of me, whoever tortures her has tortured me, and whoever pleases her has pleased me*." This was said by _____.

    a. The Imams
    b. Bibi Khadijah
    c. Abdullah (Bibi Fatemah's (s) grandfather)
    d. Prophet Muhammad (s)

5. The Prophet (S) refused proposals for Bibi Fatemah (S) because he was waiting for _____.

    a. A revelation from the Qur'an
    b. Some advice from his close friends
    c. Bibi Fatemah (s) to get older
    d. None of the above

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6. When Fatemah (S) realized the unjust nature of the political decisions after her father's death she, in accordance with the principles of Nahi Anil Munkar

    a. Told people they could not stop reading salaat
    b. Raised her voice in opposition
    c. Explained to everyone to vote for a better leader for Muslims
    d. Instructed everyone to stop being bad Muslims

Answer the following questions:

7. Who was the true successor to Prophet Muhammad (s)? Write down if you remember when this was announced.

8. How did Bibi Fatemah (s) respond to the atrocious actions of Abu Bakr?

9. Fatemah was heartbroken as she suffered oppression at the hands of those who took office after her father. Name the two things that saddened her extremely. What did she say or do that showed her discontent.

10. If we look at the hadith mentioned in question number 4, who did the oppressors really hurt and sadden?

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Chapter 2: Imam Ali's (a) Biography

Name:	Ali
Title:	Al-Murtadha (The One Whom Allah Pleased)
Kuniyat:	Abul Hassan
Father:	Abu Talib bin Abdul Muttalib
Mother:	Lady Fatemah binte Assad
Birthdate:	13th Rajab, 23 years before Hijrah, in Mecca
Imamat:	From 11 A.H. to 40 A.H.
Martyrdom:	21st Mah e Ramadhan 40 A.H.
Buried :	Najaf, Iraq.

The first Holy Imam (A) was born in the Sacred House, the Holy Kaaba, in Mecca in 600 A.D. The place of his birth was a sign of his position in the eyes of Allah and no one else has ever been born in the Holy Kaaba.

Just before he was born, his mother Fatemah binte Assad came to the Holy Kaaba and knelt down to pray. As she raised her head from her prayers, the wall of the sacred building split by a miracle. Abbas bin Abdul Muttalib and some of his companions watched in amazement as she walked into the building that closed behind her. As the door was locked, nobody could get in. Soon the news of this miraculous event had spread round Mecca.

Fatemah binte Assad stayed in the Holy Kaaba for three days and on the fourth day she stepped out holding her baby in her arms. The child had squeezed its eyes tightly shut and had not opened them since its birth. As she came out of the Holy Kaaba she saw that the Prophet (S) was anxiously waiting to receive the newly born child. He knew that this child would grow up to strengthen the cause of Islam and prove to be his right hand in the great mission that lay ahead. As he came into the arms of the Prophet (S), the Holy Imam (A) opened his eyes for the first time to look upon the blessed face of Prophethood.

At that time, the Prophet (S) had just suffered the death of his own son. He therefore was all the more attached to his new cousin and brought him up under his affectionate care.

In Nahjul Balagha the Holy Imam (A) says, "The Prophet (S) brought me up in his own arms and fed me his own morsel. I followed him wherever he went like a baby camel following its mother. Each day a new part of his character would become known to me and I would accept and follow it as a command."

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His childhood was spent in the company of the Prophet (S) and the Holy Imam (A) was similar in his character, knowledge, self-sacrifice, patience, bravery, kindness and eloquence. From his infancy, he prostrated to Allah with the Prophet (S), and when the message of Prophethood was declared, he was the first man to express that he was a Muslim.

After the declaration of Prophethood, the Holy Imam (A) was always ready to serve the Prophet (S) and defend him from his enemies. He used to write down the verses of the Holy Qur'an and discuss them with the Prophet (S) as soon as they were revealed to him. His matchless devotion lasted up to the day when the Prophet (S) passed away in 11 A.H. The Prophet (S) has said of the Holy Imam (A):

"O Ali, you are my brother in this world and the Hereafter."

"I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the gate." (Ana Medinatul `Ilmu wa `Aliyyun Baabuha)

"Nobody knows Allah except I and Ali. Nobody knows Ali except Allah and I. Nobody knows me except Allah and Ali."

"If you want to see the knowledge of Adam, the piety of Nuh, the devotion of Ibrahim, the awe of Musa and the service and devotion of Isa, look at the bright face of Ali."

Among the many titles of the Holy Imam (A) are:

1. Amir al-Mu'mineen (Commander of the Faithful)
2. Sayyid al-Wasiyyeen (Master of the successors of Prophets)
3. Qaseem an-Naar wal Jannah (Distributor of Hell and Paradise)
4. Saqi al-Kawthar (Waiter at the Pool of Kawthar)
5. Haider al-Karraar (The Charging Knight)
6. Imam al-Muttaqeen (Leader of the Pious)
7. As-Siddeeq al-Akbar (The Greatest Testifier)
8. Al-Farooq al-A'zam (The Greatest Distinguisher between Right and Wrong)
9. Ya'soob al-Muslimeen (The Best amongst Muslims)
10. Khalifatu Rasulullah (Successor of the Messenger of God)
11. Wasi ar-Rasulullah (The Viceregent of the Messenger of God)
12. Waliullah (The Friend of God)
13. Yadullah (The Hand of God)
14. As-Saafi (The Pure)
15. Asadullah al-Ghalib (The Victorious Lion of God)

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2.1 Worksheet: Imam Alis (a) Biography

1. What is the meaning of the famous Hadith of the Holy Prophet (S): “Ana Medinatul `Ilmu wa `Aliyyun Baabuha.”?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. How did Bibi Fatemah binte Assad enter into the Holy Kaaba?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. How did she step out?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. What is Imam Ali’s (a) title that means “Commander of the Faithful”?

_____

_____

_____

_____

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Chapter 3: In Mecca – Before Hijrah

The life of the Imam Ali (a) is filled with events that prove his merits and his position as the foremost amongst Muslims after the Prophet (S). No other person achieved so much or possessed such qualities. Here we list very briefly some highlights from his life.

The Holy Prophet (S) lived with his wife Bibi Khadijah (A) and his young cousin Imam Ali (A). Abu Talib could not afford to support his four sons due to his poor financial state. As a result, his son Ja'far was looked after by his brother Abbas and the Holy Prophet (S) brought up his son Ali (A).

In addition, when Imam Ali (A) was born, the Holy Prophet (S) had just lost his own son and Abu Talib's wife Fatemah binte Assad promised him that as soon as her child was a little older, she would turn it over to him. Imam Ali (A) was 9 years old when he came to live with Bibi Khadijah (A) and the Holy Prophet (S).

3.1 His Conduct at Dhul Ashira

When the Prophet (S) was commanded by Allah to preach to his relatives, he invited 40 persons to his home for a meal. After the meal was over the Prophet (P.B.U.H.) spoke to those present saying, "Oh the sons of Abdul Muttalib, God has ordered me to invite you to embrace Islam and get you introduced to it." Whosoever, having believed in my Prophethood, promises to help and assist me shall be my brother, deputy and successor and my caliph. He repeated this sentence thrice but no one except "Ali (A.S.)" gave a positive response. At that time the Prophet (S) told him, "O Ali, you are my brother, my trustee, my helper, my inheritor and my successor after me". At a time when his own family was not prepared to believe in him, the Prophet (S) received the guarantee of lifetime support from the Holy Imam (A).

Imam Ali (A) was always on the side of Prophet Muhammad (S) protecting him from the harassment of the pagans of Mecca. When the situation in Mecca became unbearable to the Muslims, Allah ordered the Prophet and all the Muslims to migrate to Medina.

3.2 The Sacrifice of Imam Ali (A) on the Night of Migration.

After he had ordered the Muslims to leave Mecca for Medina for their safety, the Prophet (S) received the command to migrate himself. As per the command of Allah he asked the Holy Imam (A) to sleep on his bed, while he left the house secretly. Although the Holy Imam (A) was aware that he might be killed in the place of the Prophet (S) he did not hesitate to carry out the order. The plot by the Quraish to collectively kill the Prophet (S) was thus averted and in recognition of the sacrifice of the Holy Imam (A), Allah revealed the following verse:

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And among men there is one who sells his soul seeking the pleasure of Allah and truly, Allah is affectionate to his (such) servants.

Baqarah, 2 : 207

3.3 His Fulfillment of the Obligations of the Prophet (s) in Mecca

A lot of people in Mecca used to leave their valuables with the Prophet (S) because of his reputation for honesty. Even his enemies trusted him in this matter. After he left for Medina he instructed the Holy Imam (A), who was the only person he could trust, to return the deposits to their owners. He was also entrusted the duty of bringing his own family to Medina.

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3.4 Worksheet: In Mecca – Before Hijrah

Fill in the blanks:

1. At Dhul Ashira, a time when his own family was not prepared to believe in him, the Prophet (S) received the guarantee of lifetime support from Imam_____(A).

2. At that time the Prophet (S) told him, "O Ali, you are my _____, my _____, my helper, my inheritor and my _____ after me"

3. On the night of Migration, although the Holy Imam (A) was aware that he might be killed in the place of the Prophet (S) he did not hesitate to carry out the order to _____ in the Prophet's _____.

4. The plot by the Quraish to collectively kill the Prophet (S) was thus _____ due to the _____ of the Holy Imam (A),

5. After he left for Medina the Prophet (S), could only trust the Holy Imam (A), to _____ valuables to their owners.

6. Imagine you were a reporter in the times of Dhul Ashira and the night of Migration. In your own words write down a half page report of how Imam Ali supported the Prophet (S).

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Chapter 4: In Medina - After Hijra

4.1 The Declaration of Brotherhood

After his arrival in Medina, the Holy Prophet (S) was faced with a new challenge of organizing and running this new Muslim state.

The Holy Prophet (S) faced three main problems. These were:

1. The danger of attack from the Quraish in Mecca and other idol worshippers from the rest of Arabia.
2. The presence of the Jews of Medina who lived within and outside the city and possessed enormous wealth.
3. The differences that existed between his own supporters.

The people who had migrated with him from Mecca (Muhajiroon) and the local Muslims who lived in Medina (Ansar) had been brought up in different environments and there was a great difference in their thinking and culture. Moreover, the tribes of Aws and Khazraj, who made up the Ansar, were sworn enemies of each other and had been fighting for over a hundred years.

The first thing the Holy Prophet (S) did was to create peace between the tribes of Aws and Khazraj. He united them on the basis of their common faith in Islam, and told them to forget their old differences.

Then, the Holy Prophet (S) turned his attention to the needs of the Muhajiroon. These brave Muslims had left all their wealth and possessions in Mecca to come with the Holy Prophet (S) to Medina. They had no wealth or property. On the command of Allah, the Holy Prophet (S) established brotherhood between the Muhajiroon and Ansar. He paired off each Muhajir with one Ansar and declared them brothers. The generous Ansar gave over one half of their wealth to their new brothers so that they could live comfortably in Medina.

At the end of all the pairings, only Imam Ali (A) was left. He asked the Holy Prophet (S) who his brother would be. The Holy Prophet (S) declared, "O Ali, you are my brother in this world as well as the next."

By this simple method, the Holy Prophet (S) ensured the unity of the Muslims and this unity enabled him to concentrate on other problems. The Muslim state in Medina was new and vulnerable. In order to establish peace and provide security for all citizens of Medina and its

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surroundings, the Holy Prophet (S) drafted an agreement to establish peace between the Muslims and the Jews living around Medina.

4.2 The Marriage of Imam Ali and Fatemah (a)

The Muslims realized that the person who married this great lady would not need to be rich and powerful, but would have to possess her qualities of truthfulness, piety and excellence. Therefore, some people suggested to Imam Ali (A) that he should go to the Prophet (S) and place a proposal for himself. Imam Ali (A) also wished this, and he approached the Prophet (S). Imam Ali (A) felt shy at his request but when the Prophet (S) encouraged him to speak what was on his mind, he managed to tell him.

On receiving the proposal of Imam Ali (A), the Prophet (S) was so pleased that he smiled and said, "It is a welcome and happy proposal." However, he asked Imam Ali (A) to wait till he asked his daughter. When the Prophet (S) mentioned the proposal of Imam Ali (A) to Lady Fatemah (A), she remained quiet due to her modesty. However, from her silence, her approval was clear to the Prophet (S) and he declared, “Fatemah’s silence is her acceptance.”

In those days, Imam Ali (A) owned nothing except his sword and battle armour. He was advised by the Prophet (S) to sell the armour to meet the expense of marriage. With the money from the sale, the items of dowry for Lady Fatemah (A) were purchased. In the month of Ramadhan 2 A.H. the Holy Prophet (S) performed the marriage ceremony of his daughter. All the Muhajiroon and Ansar gathered for the wedding, and Imam Ali (A) arranged for a feast (Walimah).

The Prophet (S) informed his daughter of the virtues and qualities of her husband. Then he turned to Imam Ali (A) and mentioned the excellence of his daughter and said that if Imam Ali (A) had not been born, there would have been none else to match her. He then divided the duties of life between them. He told Lady Fatemah (A) to take care of all the household affairs while he made Imam Ali (A) responsible for the outdoor duties.

4.3 The Battle of Badr

The pagans of Mecca and the Muslims clashed on 17th of Ramadhan 2 A.H. The Muslim army consisted of 313 soldiers, having between them only 2 horses and 70 camels. The Meccan army had 900 soldiers, 100 horses and 700 camels. They were much better equipped than the Muslims.

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According to Arab custom, there was single combat before the battle began. Three famous warriors, Utbah bin Rabiyyah, Shaybah bin Rabiyyah and Walid bin Utbah challenged the Muslims. The Holy Prophet (S) then sent ‘Ubaydah, Hamzah and Imam Ali (A). Ubaydah faced Utbah, Hamzah faced Shaybah and Imam Ali (A) faced Walid. Hamzah and Imam Ali (A) soon killed their opponents, but Ubaydah was badly hurt and later died. Imam Ali (A) then killed Utbah. The Quraish were disturbed to see the skill of the Muslim warriors and began to attack together.

The Holy Prophet (S) held back his small army and ordered them to fire arrows at the enemy. This organized attack broke up the ranks of the Meccans and, seeing their confusion, the Holy Prophet (S) ordered a general attack. The Muslims began to fight with confidence and the valley of Badr rang with the sounds of battle. Then Imam Ali (A) tore into the heart of the Meccan army, killing enemy soldiers with terrifying ease. His power and skill with the sword struck terror into the hearts of the Meccans, who began to flee.

Before long, the battle was over and the Muslims had achieved a great victory, despite being outnumbered. The Muslims lost 14 men, while 70 Meccans, and others were killed. Out of these, Imam Ali (A) battled with and was victorious over 36 men himself and helped in fighting several others.

4.4 The Battle of Uhud

In this battle, the Prophet organized his men and assigned a group to take position at a strategic hilly side where, if attacked from that side, the Muslim army would be most vulnerable. The prophet made it clear that whatever happens in the battlefield, the group members must never leave their positions, even if the Muslim army is losing and they need help. However, when this group saw the Muslim army winning the battle, all members of the group except for a few deserted their positions and ran to the battle field to get a share of the spoils.

It was in this battle that the reputation of Imam Ali (A) was confirmed and he was acknowledged as a master in the field of sword fighting. He fought so hard that his sword broke. The Holy Prophet (S) then gave him own sword "Dhulfiqar". In appreciation of the bravery of Imam Ali (A) the voice of the angel Jibrail (A) was heard from above saying, "There is no warrior except Ali; there is no sword except Dhulfiqar."

In this battle, Muslims lost 70 men and 70 wounded. Imam Ali (A) was also heavily wounded. The Meccans lost 22 warriors, 12 of them at the hands of Imam Ali (A).

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4.5 The Battle of Ahzab

In Mecca 20 leaders from the Jews that lived around Medina and 50 from Quraish signed an agreement in the Holy Kaaba that so long as they lived, they would fight the Holy Prophet (S). Thereafter, the Jews and Quraish contacted their allies and sent agents to a number of tribes for help. In this way, 10,000 soldiers gathered. They then marched upon Medina under the command of Abu Sufiyan.
When the news of these preparations reached Medina, the Holy Prophet (S) consulted his companions. Salman Farsi advised to dig a deep and wide ditch on the unprotected side of Medina. This plan was accepted and the Muslims were divided into parties of 10, and each party allotted 10 yards to dig.

The enemy was astonished to see the trench because it was a new thing for Arabs. Finally, some of the Quraish's warriors - including the famous Amr bin Abdwid - succeeded in crossing the trench at a point where it was not very wide. Amr was one of the best warriors in all of Arabia. In battle he was considered equal to 1,000 warriors. He began to challenge the Muslims to fight, but his reputation made them hesitate. Three times the Holy Prophet (S) urged the Muslims to fight Amr. Each time only Imam Ali (A) stood up. Finally, the Holy Prophet (S) allowed him to go, giving him his own sword and tying a special turban on his head. As Imam Ali (A) went to the battlefield, the Holy Prophet (S) exclaimed, "The whole Faith is going to fight the whole Infidelity".

Amr at first did not want to fight with Imam Ali (A). Imam Ali (A) then reminded Amr that he had once said that if any opponent made three requests, Amr would always grant one of them. Amr agreed to this. Imam Ali (A) then invited Amr to accept Islam or to return to Mecca or to come down from his horse as Imam (A) had no horse and was on foot.

Amr agreed to the last request and came down from his horse. A fierce battle followed.
Amr sent a murderous blow to the head of Imam Ali (A). Although Imam Ali (A) blocked it with his shield, Amr's sword broke through and inflicted a serious cut on his head. Imam Ali (A) then struck a blow to Amr's feet that brought Amr down. Suddenly the shout of "Allahu Akbar" was heard from Imam Ali (A) as he beheaded Amr. The death of Amr shocked the other warriors who had crossed the trench, and they fled away.

4.6 Removing the Idols from the Holy Kaaba

After the conquest of Mecca, the Prophet (S) decided to remove all the idols that the Meccans had placed within the walls of the Holy Kaaba. He could not reach up to some of them and he chose the Holy Imam (A) to climb onto his shoulders and knock down every last idol.

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4.7 Taking up the Standard at Khyber

During the battle of Khyber, the Muslims were unable to conquer one of the Jewish forts, despite numerous attempts under different commanders. The Holy Imam (A) was present but could not take part due to a severe eye infection. Finally the Prophet (S) declared: "Tomorrow, I will give the standard to a man whom Allah and His Apostle love. He does not flee from battle and will not come back until Allah has brought about victory at his hands". The Muslims waited anxiously for the next day, each wanting to be the one chosen.

However, the Prophet (S) called the Holy Imam (A) and restored the health of his eyes by rubbing them with his saliva. The Holy Imam (A) then went into battle with such ferociousness that none could withstand him. He did not return until he had captured every fort and brought about victory for the Muslims.

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4.8 Worksheet: In Medina - After Hijra

Fill in the blanks:

1. The _____ of _____ between the Muhajiroon and Ansar enabled the Prophet (s) to focus on other important aspects.

2. The person who married Bibi Fatemah (s) would not need to be rich and powerful, but would have to possess her qualities of _____, _____ and _____.

3. Muslims were victorious in the battle of _____ even though the Muslim army consisted of 313 soldiers while the Meccan army had 900 soldiers.

Choose the correct answer:

4. It was in this battle that the reputation of Imam Ali (A) was confirmed and he was acknowledged as a master in the field of sword fighting. He fought so hard that his sword broke and was given the Prophet's (S) own sword, the "Dhulfiqar".

    a. Battle of Badr
    b. Battle of Uhud
    c. Battle of Ahzab
    d. Battle of Khandaq

5. In this battle Salman Farsi advised to dig a deep and wide ditch on the unprotected side of Medina.

    a. Battle of Badr
    b. Battle of Uhud
    c. Battle of Ahzab
    d. Battle of Khyber

6. During this battle, the Muslims were unable to conquer one of the Jewish forts, until Imam Ali (A) went into battle and brought about victory for the Muslims.

    a. Battle of Badr
    b. Battle of Uhud
    c. Battle of Ahzab
    d. Battle of Khyber

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7. During the battle of Khyber, Imam Ali (A) had a(n) _____ infection that was cured by the Prophet (S).

    a. Hand
    b. Foot
    c. Stomach
    d. Eye

8. To remove the idols form the Kaaba Imam Ali (A) had to climb on the _____ _____.

    a. Ladder available
    b. Side walls
    c. Prophet's(s) shoulders
    d. Stacked bricks

9. Who was Amr bin Abdwid?

10. Explain the phrase "the whole Faith is going to fight the whole Infidelity".

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Chapter 5: The Virtues of Imam Ali (a)

5.1 The Virtues and the Qualities of the Holy Imam (a)

The Holy Imam (A) was a man who possessed and displayed the greatest character that a human being is capable of achieving. In all fields he has left for his followers a model on which to base their own lives. The Prophet (S) said to the Holy Imam (A), "O Ali, you will be engaged in disputes but you will overcome them because of seven qualities that you have which no one else has: you are the first of those who believed in me, the greatest of them in war, the most knowledgeable of them in the signs of Allah, the one of them who is most loyal in keeping the covenant (Ahd) of Allah, the most compassionate of them towards people, the most capable of giving equal treatment and the greatest of them in distinction before Allah." Hereunder, we attempt to list some of his outstanding merits.

5.1.1 His Faith in Allah and the Prophet (s)

The Holy Imam (AS) was the first man to acknowledge he was a Muslim. The Prophet (S) has said, "The angels bless me and Ali for 70 years because, for a time, Ali and I were the only ones who recited the Kalima." He also said, "Ali was the first to believe in me and will be the first to shake my hand in greeting on the Day of Judgment. He is the greatest testifier of the truth (Siddeeq). He is the chief of the believers."

5.1.2 His Knowledge

The Prophet (S) said, "I am the city of knowledge and Ali is the gate."
"Ali is the most learned of my community and the most capable of giving legal decisions after me."
The Holy Imam (A) proved superiority in all branches of knowledge throughout his life. After the death of the Prophet (S), even the Caliphs who had wrongly seized power had to come to the Holy Imam (A) for the solution of their difficult problems. When he came to power, he put on the cloak and turban of the Prophet (S) and went to the mosque and sat on the pulpit.

After praising Allah and giving guidance to the people, he sat back confidently, knitted his fingers and placed them on his stomach. Then, he said, "Ask me before you lose me. Ask me, for I have the knowledge of those who came earlier and those who will come later. I could give judgments to the people of the Tawrat by their Tawrat, to the people of the Gospels by their Gospels, to the people of the Psalms by their Psalms and the people of the Furqaan (Holy Qur'an) by their Furqaan. By Allah, I know the Qur'an and its interpretation better than anyone who claims knowledge of it."

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5.1.3 His Bravery

The Holy Imam (A) was always at the forefront of the battles of Islam and personally brought about victory for the Muslims in many of them. He was both a great soldier and a great general and was the victor of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khyber and Hunayn.

Not only was he unstoppable in the battlefield, he also taught his friends and enemies how to conduct themselves in war. His bravery extended to his general dealing with the people and he never hesitated in saying or doing something in the cause of Islam, no matter what the opposition.

5.1.4 His Eloquence

The Holy Imam (A) had a total command over the Arabic language. During the time when others wrongfully occupied the Caliphate he busied himself in writing various books. He compiled the Holy Qur'an and also regulated the syntax and grammar of the Arabic language. Some of his lectures and words are contained in the book Nahjul Balagha, which contains the best examples of Arabic oratory.

5.1.5 His Ability to Govern

5.1.6 His Piety

5.1.7 His Generosity

5.2 To Love the Holy Imam (a) and to be his Shia

The Holy Imam (A) once said, "The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, told me that only believers will love me and only hypocrites will hate me." Therefore, one of the ways in which the faith of a Muslim can be judged is by examining his feelings towards the Holy Imam (A).

When Umme Salama, a wife of the Prophet (S), was asked about the Holy Imam (A), she replied, "I heard the Apostle of God say that Ali and his Shia will be the successful ones." The Prophet (S) once said, "70,000 of my community will enter Heaven without any reckoning or punishment against them." Then he turned to the Holy Imam (A) and said, "They are your Shia and you are their Imam. "

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Another time the Prophet (S) said to the Holy Imam (A), "Both I and you have been created from one piece of clay. Part of it was left over and from that Allah created our Shia. On the Day of Resurrection all the people will be called by the names of their mothers except our Shia. They will be summoned by the names of their fathers because of their good birth." Once when the Prophet (S) was with a group of Muslims he said to them. "O People of Ansar, instil in your children the love of Ali bin Abu Talib (A). Whoever loves him should know that he is rightly guided and whoever hates him should know that he is in error."

May Allah raise us on the Day of Judgment at the side of Imam Ali (A).

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5.3 Worksheet: The Virtues of Imam Ali (a)

Fill in the blanks:

1. Imam (A) was a man who possessed and displayed the greatest _____ that a human being is capable of achieving.

2. The Prophet said of imam Ali (A): He is the greatest _____ of the truth (Siddeeq). He is the _____of the believers."

3. The Holy Imam (A) once said, "The Prophet, may Allah bless him and his family, told me that only _____will love me and only _____ will hate me."

4. The Prophet (s) once said: "O People of Ansar, instill in your children the love of _____ _____ _____ _____. Whoever loves him should know that he is rightly guided and whoever hates him should know that he is in error."

5. Imam Ali's (A) ability to govern, his piety, and his generosity were also among the qualities he had that were not possessed by others.

    a. True
    b. False

6. The Holy Imam (A) proved _____ in all branches of knowledge throughout his life.

7. After the death of the Prophet (S), even the _____ who had wrongly seized power had to come to the Holy Imam (A) for the solution of their difficult problems.

8. Imam Ali (A) used to say: "Ask me before you lose me. Ask me, for I have the _____ of those who came earlier and those who will come later

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Give an example of the following two qualities of Imam Ali (a)**:**

1. His bravery.
2. His eloquence.

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Chapter 6: The Event of Ghadeer Khum

6.1 The Farewell Pilgrimage

Ten years after the migration (*hijrah*), the Messenger of Allah [peace and blessings be upon him and his Progeny] ordered to his close followers to call all the people in different places to join him in his last pilgrimage. On this pilgrimage he taught them how to perform the pilgrimage in a correct and unified form.

This was first time that the Muslims with this magnitude gathered in one place in the presence of their leader, the Messenger of Allah [s]. On his way to Mecca, more than seventy thousand people followed Prophet [s]. On the fourth day of Dhulhijjah more than one hundred thousand Muslims had entered Mecca.

6.1.1 Date and Location

The date of this incident was the 18th of Dhulhijjah of the year 10 AH (10 March 632 CE).

After completing his last pilgrimage (*Hajjatul-Wada'*), Prophet [s] was leaving Mecca toward Medina, where he and the crowd of people reached a place called **Ghadeer Khum** (which is close to today's al-Juhfah). It was a place where people from different provinces used to greet each other before taking different routes for their homes.

6.1.2 Revelation of Qur'anic Verse 5:67

In this place, the following verse of the Qur'an was revealed:

> ***"O Apostle! Deliver what has been sent down to you from your Lord; and if you don't do it, you have not delivered His message (at all); and Allah will protect you from the people ..." (Qur'an 5:67)***

The last sentence in the above verse indicates that the Prophet [s] was mindful of the reaction of his people in delivering that message but Allah informs him not to worry, for He will protect His Messenger from people.

6.1.3 The Sermon

Upon receiving the verse, the Prophet [s] stopped on that place (the pond of Khum) which was extremely hot. Then he sent for all people who have been ahead in the way, to come back and

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waited until all pilgrims who fell behind, arrived and gathered. He ordered Salman [r] to use rocks and camel tooling to make a pulpit (*minbar*) so he could make his announcement. It was around noontime in the first of the Fall, and due to the extreme heat in that valley, people were wrapping their robes around their feet and legs, and were sitting around the pulpit, on the hot rocks.

On this day the Messenger of Allah [s] spent approximately five hours in this place; three hours of which he was on the pulpit. He recited nearly one hundred verses from The Glorious Qur'an, and for seventy three times reminded and warned people of their deeds and future. Then he gave them a long speech.

The following is a part of his speech that has been widely narrated by the Sunni traditions:

6.1.4 Tradition of the Two Weighty Things (thaqalayn)

The Messenger of Allah [s] declared:

> *"It seems the time approached when I shall be called away (by Allah) and I shall answer that call. I am leaving for you two precious things and if you adhere to them both, you will never go astray after me. They are the Book of Allah and my Progeny that is my Ahlul Bait. The two shall never separate from each other until they come to me by the Pool (of Paradise)."*

6.1.5 Acknowledgement of Authority

Then the Messenger of Allah continued:

"Do I not have more right over the believers than what they have over themselves?"

People cried and answered: "Yes, O' Messenger of God."

Then he uttered the key sentence denoting the clear designation of 'Ali as the leader of the Muslim *ummah*. The Prophet [s] held up the hand of 'Ali and said:

> "For whomever I am his Leader (***mawla***), 'Ali is his Leader (***mawla***)."

The Prophet [s] continued:

> "O' God, love those who love him, and be hostile to those who are hostile to him."

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These were the key parts of the speech of the Prophet [s]. There are also more detailed versions of this sermon that are recorded by many Sunni authorities.

6.1.6 Revelation of Qur'anic Verse 5:3

Immediately after the Prophet [s] finished his speech, the following verse of the Qur'an was revealed:

> "Today I have perfected your religion and completed my favor upon you, and I was satisfied that Islam be your religion." (Qur'an 5:3)

The above verse clearly indicates that Islam without clearing up matter of leadership after Prophet [s] was not complete, and completion of religion was due to announcement of the Prophet's immediate successor.

6.1.7 Hassan b. Thabit's poetry

Immediately after the Prophet's speech, Hassan b. Thabit, the Companion and poet of the Messenger of Allah [s], asked for his permission to compose a few verses of poetry about Imam 'Ali [a] for the audience. The Prophet [s] said: "Say with the blessings of Allah". Hassan stood up and said: "O' people of Quraish. I follow with my words what preceded and witnessed by the Messenger of Allah [s]. He then composed and recited a beautiful poem.

6.1.8 Oath of Allegiance

After his speech, the Messenger of Allah [s] asked everybody to give the oath of allegiance to 'Ali [a] and congratulate him. Among those who did so was 'Umar b. al-Khattab, who said:

> "Well done Ibn Abi Talib! Today you became the Leader (***mawla***) of all believing men and women."

6.1.9 Number of People in Ghadeer Khum

Allah ordered His Prophet [s] to inform the people of this designation at a time of crowded populous so that all could become the narrators of the tradition, while they exceeded a hundred thousand.

Narrated by Zayd b. Arqam: Abu al-Tufayl said: "I heard it from the Messenger of Allah [s], and there was no one (there) except that he saw him with his eyes and heard him with his ears."

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6.1.10 Revelation of Qur'anic Verse 70:1-3

Some Sunni commentators further report that the first three verses of the chapter of al-Ma'arij (70:1-3) were revealed when a dispute arose after the Prophet [s] reached Medina. It is recorded that:

On the day of Ghadeer the Messenger of Allah summoned the people toward 'Ali and said:

> *"Ali is the **mawla** of whom I am **mawla**." The news spread quickly all over urban and rural areas. When Harith Ibn Nu'man al-Fahri (or Nadhr Ibn Harith according to another tradition) came to know of it, he rode his camel and came to Medina and went to the Messenger of Allah [s] and said to him: "You commanded us to testify that there is no deity but Allah and that you are the Messenger of Allah. We obeyed you. You ordered us to perform the prayers five times a day and we obeyed. You ordered us to observe fasts during the month of Ramadhan and we obeyed. Then you commanded us to offer pilgrimage to Mecca and we obeyed. But you are not satisfied with all this and you raised your cousin by your hand and imposed him upon us as our master by saying `Ali is the **mawla** of whom I am **mawla**.' Is this imposition from Allah or from you?"*

The Prophet [s] said:

> *"By Allah who is the only deity! This is from Allah, the Mighty and the Glorious."*

On hearing this Harith turned back and proceeded towards his she-camel saying: "O Allah! If what Muhammad said is correct then fling on us a stone from the sky and subject us to severe pain and torture." He had not reached his she-camel when Allah, who is above all defects, flung at him a stone that struck him on his head, penetrated his body and passed out through his lower body and left him dead. It was on this occasion that Allah, the exalted, caused to descend the following verses:

> ***"A questioner questioned about the punishment to fall. For the disbelievers there is nothing to avert it, from Allah the Lord of the Ascent." (70:1-3)***

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6.2 Worksheet: The Event of Ghadeer Khum

TRUE/FALSE

T **F**	One of the significant aspects of the Prophet's last pilgrimage was that he wanted to teach the people to perform the hajj in a correct and unified form.
T **F**	There were always many people who followed the Prophet; therefore the crowd following him into Mecca was not extraordinary.
T **F**	While returning from Hajj, the Prophet stopped and gave a famous sermon. During this sermon, he recited about 100 verses from the Qur'an.
T **F**	Sunni traditions do not acknowledge the Prophet's sermon at Ghadeer Khum.
T **F**	The event of Ghadeer Khum has Qur'anic verses to support it.

FILL IN THE BLANK

1. The date of Ghadeer Khum is _____.
2. Thaqalyn means _____.
3. "For whoever I am his Leader (*mawla*), _____.

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Chapter 7: The Event of Saqifa

7.1 The Last Days of the Prophet (s)

The Prophet (S) returned from the Farewell Hajj at the end of the month of Dhulhijjah of 10 A.H. After passing the one-month of Muharram, he fell ill at the beginning of Safar 11 A.H.

At that time, news was received that the Romans to the north west of Arabia were preparing to attack the Muslim capital of Medina. The Prophet (S) reacted to this dangerous situation by ordering the mobilization of a huge Muslim army under the command of Usama bin Zaid. He specifically ordered all the Muhajiroon who had migrated with him to Medina to participate in the battle, except for Imam Ali (A).

The expedition to Syria under Usama shows that the Prophet (S) had two things in mind. Firstly, all the Muhajiroon would be away in the expedition, so Imam Ali (A) could take over his appointment as Caliph without any interference. Secondly, he wanted to teach the people that age was not important in the distribution of responsibility and power, and the criteria for leadership were personality and ability.

However, some of the Muhajiroon knew the intentions of the Prophet (S) and used his weak condition as an excuse to disobey him. They wanted to make certain that they were in Medina at the time of his death so that they could plot to steal the Caliphate from Imam Ali (A).

When the Prophet (S) expired, Imam Ali (A) was the only person with him. The **Muhajiroon of Mecca and the Ansar of Medina** in their greed lost no time in contesting the matter of the Caliphate. They had gathered at a place called **Saqifa bani Sa'eda** and each group was claiming that they had the right to the Caliphate.

One can only wonder at their actions, because only two months ago the Holy Prophet (S) had openly declared that Imam Ali (A) would be his successor.

The **Muhajiroon** claimed that they had a greater right to the Caliphate because:

- They had been Muslims for longer and had supported the Holy Prophet (S) in Mecca when he had very few friends.

- They also claimed to be his kin and said that they had migrated from their homes in Mecca in very difficult circumstances, leaving behind all their wealth and property.

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The **Ansar** insisted that they had a greater right to the Caliphate because

- They had given the Holy Prophet (S) shelter in Medina when he could live in Mecca no longer.
- They had also protected him in his time of need and had fought at his side in battles against powerful enemies.
- They recalled how for 13 years he had preached amongst the Meccans and only a handful had become Muslims.
- They argued that it was the Ansar who had given Islam strength and consolidation.

When **Umar bin Khattab** and **Abu Bakr bin Qahafa** reached Saqifa, the arguments had almost been settled in favor of the Ansar, who had chosen **Sa'd bin Ubadah** to lead the Muslims. **Umar** did not find this acceptable at all as he had already planned to bring in a man from the **Muhajiroon**. He urged Abu Bakr to make a speech and turn the situation. **Abu Bakr** rose and said that the Arabs would not accept any Caliph who was not from the tribe of **Quraish**, which was the tribe of the Holy Prophet (S). He also praised the merits of the Ansar to keep them quiet. The Ansar were not fooled by the clever words of Abu Bakr and while there was some silence, Abu Bakr received help from an unexpected quarter.

The two main tribes of the **Ansar were the Aws and Khazraj**. The Holy Prophet (S) had settled the old enmity between them long ago, but now it came out into the open.

To stop the selection of **Sa'd bin Ubadah who was the chief of the Khazraj**, **Bashir bin Sa'd from the tribe of Aws suddenly went forward and gave his allegiance to Abu Bakr. Three other men from the Aws followed him. Suddenly, the tables had turned and now the Muhajiroon had the upper hand.**

Despite protests from the tribe of Khazraj and a few followers of Imam Ali (A), **Abu Bakr was elected as the first Caliph.** How strange was their behavior!

- While some of the Muhajiroon sold their religion for their self-interests, others had hearts full of hatred toward Imam Ali (A) because he killed their non-believing relatives.
- The people of Aws sold their religion for fear that the Khazraj might come to power.
- The rest of the people followed like sheep, too weak or uncaring to protest. The few who did raise their voices to defend the unrecognized rights of Imam Ali (A) were ignored and outnumbered.

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Meanwhile, Imam Ali (A) was occupied with washing the body of Prophet Muhammad (S) and preparing for the funeral. The members of **Bani Hashim** and some loyal Muslims were too occupied with the passing away of the Holy Prophet (S) to give any thought to worldly affairs. By the time they learnt of the happenings at Saqifa, it was too late to do anything.

When Imam Ali came to exercise his right to the Caliphate as per the orders of the Holy Prophet (S) at Ghadeer Khum, his claim was rejected and he was forced to return to his house. Later, Abu Bakr sent Umar to Bibi Fatemah's (A) house, where Imam Ali (A) and some friends had gathered. **Umar had instructions to bring Imam Ali (A) to Abu Bakr to pay the oath of allegiance to him. When Imam Ali (A) refused to do this, Umar threatened to burn down the house**. Imam Ali (A) then came out with Abbas and Zubayr. From the open door was heard the sound of Bibi Fatemah (A) weeping.

She was saying,

> *"O Father, how soon after your death are troubles pouring on our head at the hands of the son of Khattab and the son of Abu Qahafa. How soon they have ignored your words of Ghadeer Khum and your saying that Ali was to you as Haroon was to Musa."*

Hearing these heartrending words, the companions of Umar could not keep themselves from weeping and turned back.However Umar was bent on humiliating Imam Ali (A). He insisted that Imam Ali (A) be led to the mosque tied with a rope so that he could not escape.

The Muslims now saw an amazing sight. The Lion of Allah; the man who was the champion of Badr, Uhud, Khandaq, Khyber and Hunayn, was being led by Umar, who had run away from the battle of Uhud when the Holy Prophet (S) was injured.

It was a measure of the patience of Imam Ali (A) that he did not use force in the interests of Islam. He knew that nothing could be gained by fighting, and a civil war would destroy the Muslims.

When Imam Ali (A) was brought in front of Abu Bakr, Umar insisted that if he did not give the oath of allegiance, he should be killed. Imam Ali (A) replied,

> *"Will you kill a man who is a servant of the Lord and a brother of the Apostle of the Lord?"*

Umar then turned to Abu Bakr who had remained silent till then, asking him to decide Imam Ali's (A) fate. However, Abu Bakr said that so long as Bibi Fatemah (A) was alive, he would not force her husband to give allegiance to him.

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After that Imam Ali (A) was released and he went directly to the grave of the Holy Prophet (S) where he stood, reflecting on how the attitude of the people had changed now that his brother had left this world.

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7.2 Worksheet: The Event of Saqifa

Continue the sentences:

1. The Prophet told all **Muhajiroon** to battle in Medina under the command of Usama bin Zaid. The only person he did not send to battle was

2. Two important things the Prophet had on his mind while planning this battle were:

   i.

   ii.

3. The **Ansar** and **Muhajiroon** fought over their right of

4. **Saqifa bani Sa'eda** was a place where

5. Abu Bakr claimed he had right to because he was from the tribe of

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Answer the following questions:

1. Why was Imam Ali left out of the Prophets plan for going to Syria?

2. What did Abu Bakr want from Imam Ali (a)?

3. Who came to get Imam Ali (a) from his house?

4. Explain why Imam Ali (a) did not fight back when he was taken forcefully?

5. Why do you think it was so important for the new caliphate to get Imam Ali's (a) allegiance?

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Chapter 8: Abu Bakr - The First Caliph

On the day after the people had given him their allegiance at Saqifa, Abu Bakr came to the mosque of the Holy Prophet (S) and seated himself on the pulpit. A large gathering was present to pledge the general allegiance. Umar stood nearby ready to prevent any trouble from the friends and followers of Imam Ali (A).

Abu Bakr then made his first address to the people, during which he said,

> *"I have been placed in this authority, although I do not like it. By Allah, I would have been pleased if any of you had taken it in my place. If you expect me to act like the Apostle of God, then I cannot do it. He was honored and preserved from error by the Lord, while I am an ordinary man, no better than any of you. When you see me steadfast then obey me, and when you see that I turn aside from the right path then set me aright. I have a devil that seizes me sometimes, and when you see me enraged then avoid me because at that time I will not listen to anything."*

What an incredible speech by the new leader of the Muslims! In one go he admitted that he was not the right man for the task and warned that he would probably make mistakes. He knew fully well that his knowledge in religious matters was only average, so he covered any future problems by mentioning his "devil". It was not a speech to inspire any confidence and it is a wonder that he got away with such miserable and apologetic words.

Umar and Abu Bakr were so busy in securing the Caliphate that neither was present at the funeral of the Holy Prophet (S). Although Abu Bakr was now the Caliph, it was not a universally popular choice. The members of Bani Hashim and certain pious Muslims like Zubayr, Miqdaad, Salman, Abu Dhar, Ammar, Barra bin Azhab, Khalid bin Sa'id, Abu Ayyub Ansari, Khazima bin Thabit and others refused to acknowledge him, believing that the position belonged to Imam Ali (A).

Imam Ali (A) was naturally grieved at the course of events, but he patiently endured this injustice for the sake of Islam. He turned his attention to collecting the Holy Qur'an and compiling it in order of its revelation.

At the time of his election Abu Bakr was 60 years of age. He was one of the earliest converts to Islam. After the marriage of his daughter Ayesha to the Holy Prophet (S), he was called Abu Bakr in reference to his daughter. Abu Bakr used to trade in cloth and was also a genealogist i.e. he knew the family trees of the Arabs, especially the Quraish.

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One of the first things Abu Bakr did as a Caliph was to contest Bibi Fatimah's (A) ownership to the land of Fadak; an action that she never forgave him for. According to her will, he and Umar were not allowed to attend her funeral.

As Abu Bakr was not recognized as a legitimate heir to the Holy Prophet (S), the various tribes around Arabia stopped paying their taxes to the Muslim state. Abu Bakr decided to stop the voices of dissatisfaction with a show of strength, so he mobilized the Muslim army under various commanders and sent them to reclaim the distant provinces.

On reaching their destination the commanders were instructed to give the Adhaan to test the faith of the local people. If they responded, they were to be asked to repent and submit to the Caliph, if they resisted they were to be attacked and their women and children made prisoners. With these instructions, the various commanders left Medina.

The man who commanded the largest division was a brilliant general named Khalid bin Al-Walid. He was the same man who had caused the defeat of the Muslims at Uhud. Despite his later conversion to Islam, he was a cruel soldier and had no faith at all. He had been sent against Tulaiha, a man claiming to be a new prophet, in the northeast. After Tulaiha ran away and the tribes of Bani Hawaazan surrendered, his task was over and his men advised him to return to Medina.

However, Khalid wanted to continue fighting and he led his men southwards to the tribe of Bani Yarb. The chief of this tribe was Malik bin Nuwaira, a noble man who was famous for his generosity, horsemanship and poetry. He also had for his wife a beautiful woman named Laila. When Malik heard that Khalid was approaching at the head of 4,500 men, he realized that it was useless to fight. When the Adhaan was given, he responded to the call with all his men.

Khalid however, would not have any of it and brutally killed Malik and married his widow the same night, despite the time limit fixed by the Holy Prophet (S) for marrying a widow. Although Khalid was later charged by the testimony of his own men, who were shocked by his inhuman conduct, Abu Bakr pardoned him.

The Caliphate of Abu Bakr is filled with incidents where he proved himself to be weak, a poor judge and inadequate in matters of religion. He finally died in 13 A.H. after ruling for 2 years and 3 months.

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8.1 Worksheet: Abu Bakr – The First Caliph

TRUE/FALSE: If false, *correct* statement with a *true* statement.

1. Abu Bakr and Umar attended the Prophet's (s) funeral.

2. Imam Ali (a) tried hard to remove Abu Bakr from Caliphate.

3. Imam Ali (a) had many followers that did not pledge to Abu Bakr.

4. Abu Bakr had no relations other than friendship with the Prophet (s).

5. Abu Bakr left Bibi Fatemah (s) alone after taking the Caliphate.

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SHORT ANSWERS:

1. Name some of the people (about 5) who were pious Muslims and believed that the successor to Prophet Muhammad (s) should have been Imam Ali (a)?

2. How did Abu Bakr's leadership affect the people? What did Abu Bakr do to control them?

3. Who was Khalid bin Walid?

4. What incident occurred between Khalid bin Walid and Malik bin Nuwaira?

5. Khalid bin Walid's conduct was shunned by his own men, but who pardoned him and why do you think it was wrong to do so.

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Chapter 9: Umar - The Second Caliph

Umar al-Khattab was privately selected by Abu Bakr to succeed him and he took over the Caliphate on the day of the death of Abu Bakr. In his first address to the people he said,

"O God! Verily I am rough in temper, therefore soften me; and verily I am weak, therefore strengthen me; and verily I am miserly, therefore make me generous".

With these poorly chosen words, Umar began his rule that was to last for 10 years and six months.

Only one year after he came to power Umar made new religious laws.

1. He introduced a special prayer called Tarawih, during the month of Ramadhan. This prayer, which requires recitations of large portions of the Holy Qur'an, is still recited by Sunni Muslims today.
2. He also stated that the minor Hajj (Umrae Tamattu) and the temporary marriage (Mut'a) were Haraam from that time onwards.
3. He reduced the number of Takbirs in Namaaze Mayyit from five to four.

Umar had no authority to make these changes because the Holy Prophet (S) has said that the things that he himself had taught to be Halaal and Haraam shall remain unchanged till the Day of Judgment.

Umar was once preaching from the pulpit when Imam Hussein (A), who was then only a young boy, stood up and told him,

"Come down from the pulpit of my father".

Umar admitted,

"It is the pulpit of your father, not the pulpit of my father, but who told you to say this?"

Imam Ali (A) who was present, rose and said

"By Allah! No one told him what to say".

During the reign of Umar, the boundaries of the Muslim territories were expanded greatly and many foreign lands were conquered. These included Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem, Egypt and Persia.

Umar placed ill-chosen governors in many of these new lands. In particular, he was responsible for the growth of power of Muawiyah bin Abu Sufiyan in Syria. By initially placing Muawiyah in power, Umar was the originator of the massacre in Kerbala, which took place at the orders of Muawiyah's evil son Yazeed.

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Umar's knowledge of the Holy Qur'an was weak. He used to make rounds in the streets of Medina at night with a whip in his hand. Once he passed a house where he heard someone singing. He jumped over the back wall and found a man and woman drinking wine. He shouted in anger,

"O enemies of God, did you think your sin would pass unnoticed?"

The man replied,

"O Umar, if I am guilty of one sin, then you are guilty of three wrong acts according to the Holy Qur'an".

Umar could not believe his ears and challenged the man to prove his words. The man quoted three verses of the Holy Qur'an:

1. ***O you who believe, avoid much suspicion ... and do not spy.***
   Hujuraat, 49: 12 (Part)

2. ***...It is not good that you should enter your houses from behind but the righteous one is he who guards himself against evil and enters the houses by the doors...***
   Baqarah, 2: 189 (Part)

3. ***O you who believe, do not enter houses other than your own houses until you have asked for permission and greeted those within...***
   Nur 24: 27 (Part)

On hearing this Umar was ashamed of his ignorance of the Holy Qur'an and asked for forgiveness for the intrusion. After the man promised not to touch wine again, Umar left. Many such incidents occurred and Umar was embarrassed time and time again by his poor command of the verses of the Holy Qur'an. It is a wonder that he still thought himself fit to rule the Muslims!

Numerous incidents have been noted in history where Umar made hasty and incorrect decisions that were changed by the presence and intervention of Imam Ali (A).

Once Umar ordered that a mad woman who had been found guilty of adultery should be whipped as per the prescribed punishment. As the poor woman was being dragged along on the way to be flogged, Imam Ali (A) passed by and asked what was going on. When he was informed of the situation he said,

"Do you not know that the Holy Prophet (S) has said that the order of punishment should be withheld from a mad person till they recover, because they are not in control of their actions".

Umar then ordered the woman to be released. Such incidents happened so many times that Umar used to say,

"If it was not for Ali, Umar would have perished".

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Umar had a rule that non-Arabs were not allowed to enter Medina. However, he relaxed the rule for one man only at the request of his governor of Kufa. The man in question was called Abu Lulu. He was not an Arab, but he was a good carpenter, blacksmith and engraver.

Abu Lulu was heavily taxed for the privilege of residing in Medina and asked Umar to increase his allowance. Umar refused and instead commissioned him to build a windmill for grinding grain.

Abu Lulu promised him that he would build him such a windmill that people would always talk about it. The way he said it made Umar wonder whether he was being threatened and his fears proved correct.

A few days later Abu Lulu ambushed Umar in the early hours of the morning and stabbed him in the stomach and Umar died three days later on 26th Dhulhijjah at the age of 63 years.

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9.1 Worksheet: Umar - The Second Caliph

True/False: Circle either T or F.

1. Umar was chosen by Khalid bin Walid to become caliph. **T F**
2. In Umar's first speech, he praised himself and his Islamic character. **T F**
3. Syria, Jordan, Jerusalem, Egypt and Persia were some of the countries captured during Umar's reign. **T F**
4. Umar was well respected by the Muslim community he ruled. **T F**
5. Umar would take his time and research decisions before making them. **T F**
6. Umar used to say, "If it was not for Ali, Umar would have perished" **T F**

Short Answers:

1. Umar changed some Islamic laws. Name three of them.

    a.

    b.

    c.

Name one incident that proves Umar was not well versed in Qur'an and Islamic principles.

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Chapter 10: Othman – The Third Caliph

Just before he died, Umar nominated six companions of the Holy Prophet (S), to choose from amongst themselves his successor. The six were Abdur Rahman bin Awf, Othman bin Affan, Ali bin Abu Talib (A), Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas, Zubayr bin Awam and Talha bin Ubaidullah.

This was a very clever move by Umar because he had chosen people who would not readily favor Imam Ali (A). Furthermore, he had instructed that if any of these six challenged the appointment of the person who was finally declared Caliph, he should be killed.

After his death the nominees met but could not reach any conclusion. At last, Abdur Rahman said that he would forego his claim for the Caliphate if they allowed him to elect the Caliph. Othman agreed to this but Imam Ali (A) said that he would only agree if Abdur Rahman promised not to give consideration to family but judge only on merit. He said this because Othman was the brother-in-law of Abdur Rahman and the two were friends. Abdur Rahman accepted the condition and then talked to each of the candidates privately.

Zubayr was in favor of Imam Ali (A), Talha was not present in Medina and how Sa'd voted is uncertain. Both Imam Ali (A) and Othman pressed their own claim. Therefore the selection narrowed down to these two men.

The next day the mosque was crowded because everyone wanted to know who their new Caliph would be. Abdur Rahman had discussed the situation with Amr al-Aas, who was a shrewd politician with no religious morals.

Acting on Amr's advice, Abdur Rahman asked Imam Ali (A) to become Caliph as long as he would agree to rule by the Holy Qur'an, the teachings of the Holy Prophet (S) and the practices of Abu Bakr and Umar.
As expected, Imam Ali (A) agreed to the first two conditions but flatly refused to follow the practices of Abu Bakr and Umar. When Othman was given the same conditions, he agreed at once and was thus declared the third Caliph.

Imam Ali (A) told Abdur Rahman,

> *"It is not the first time I have been deprived of my rights, but you have not been free of self interest in your decision."*

On hearing these words Abdur Rahman warned Imam Ali (A) that Umar had said that the one who defies the selection should be killed, whereupon Imam Ali (A) left the gathering in disgust.

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The choice of Othman was a bad mistake and in later years the man almost destroyed the faith and dignity of the Muslims. His first speech to the public was a very poor effort and he lamely finished by saying,

"We were never preachers but the Lord will teach us."

From the first day of his rule, Othman began systematically replacing the governors of the major provinces with his own relatives from the Bani Umayyah.

Thus, in Kufa he appointed his drunkard brother Walid to replace Sa'd bin Waqqaas. In Egypt he replaced Amr al-Aas with his foster brother Abdallah bin Abi Sarh, who has been cursed in the Holy Qur'an (Surae An'am, verse 93) for inventing lies and saying that he had revelations from Allah.

He recalled back to Medina Hakam bin al-Aas, who had been exiled for life by the Holy Prophet (S). Hakam was Othman's uncle and Othman made Hakam's evil son Marwan his secretary and gave him huge gifts from the property of the Muslims. He also gave Marwan the property of Fadak and made him his son-in-law.

As Othman began to squander the public money on his relatives openly, resentment against him grew from all quarters. Ammar Yasir, an old and respected companion of the Holy Prophet (S) challenged Othman's conduct and was severely beaten for his words. This action against a man like Ammar outraged the people.

In Syria, another great companion of the Holy Prophet (S), Abu Dhar Ghifari, was going around warning the governor Muawiyah and the people against their evil ways. Muawiyah sent Abu Dhar to Medina where Othman had the bad manners to insult him. He then cruelly banished the old man to a desert place called Rabazha, where he died of neglect two years later.

Othman's high-handed behavior and the cruelties and excesses of his worthless governors caused unrest throughout the empire. Riots broke out everywhere. In Medina itself there were calls to remove Othman.

The Caliph was surrounded from all sides and turned to Imam Ali (A) to appeal on his behalf. Imam Ali (A) agreed provided Othman publicly apologized for his mistakes. In despair, Othman mounted the pulpit and with a voice broken by sobs and tears he begged the forgiveness of Allah and assured the public that he was repentant. Because of his sorry state and the intervention of Imam Ali (A) the people were subdued.

However, the Egyptians insisted that Muhammad the son of Abu Bakr replace their cruel governor Abdallah bin Sarh. He was a pious man who had been raised from his infancy by Imam Ali (A), who had married Abu Bakr's widow.

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Othman agreed to this demand, but secretly sent a letter to his brother in Egypt warning him of the situation and advising him to kill Muhammad bin Abu Bakr on his arrival. Unfortunately for Othman, Muhammad himself intercepted this messenger on the way to Egypt. The Egyptians were outraged by the Caliph's treachery and returned to Medina in a furious mood. The news of his actions spread and finally Othman had to take refuge in his palace, which was then surrounded by people calling for his blood.

After a siege of 40 days the palace was broken into and Othman was killed by repeated stab wounds. His body was left on the ground for three days before he was buried in the graveyard of the Jews. He was 82 years old and had ruled for 11 years.

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10.1 Worksheet: Othman – The Third Caliph

Choose the correct answer:

1. Othman replaced Sa'd bin Waqqaas the governor Kufa by appointing
    a. Walid
    b. Abdallah bin abi Sarh
    c. Marwan
    d. Imam Ali (A)

2. The Number of companions Umar chose who would select the next Caliph From amongst themselves were
    a. 4
    b. 3
    c. 6
    d. 8

3. Othman was Declared Caliph By which companion Of the Holy Prophet
    a. Talha bin Ubaidullah
    b. Sa'd bin Abi Waqqaas
    c. Zubayr bin Awam
    d. Abdur Rahman bion Awf

4. The Egyptians insisted that their cruel governor Abdallah Bin Sarh be replaced by whom
    a. Muhammad the son of Abu Bakr
    b. Abu Dhar Ghiffari
    c. Muawiyah
    d. Imam Ali (A)

Answer the questions below:

5. Why do you think the process of choosing a Caliph was a clever move by Umar?

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6. Why did Imam Ali (A) refuse the Caliphate when he was offered by Abdur Rahman Bin Awf?

7. Who became the next caliph and how did he rule?

8. What turned people against this Caliph?

9. Who did the Egyptians want to replace their governor?

10. What outraged the Egyptians and led to the death of Othman?

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Chapter 11: The Caliphate of Imam Ali (a)

After the murder of Othman, there was great unrest in the city of Medina due to the absence of any government. The main citizens of the city called for the immediate election of a Caliph to end the danger of a civil war. Two men had ambitions to become Caliph. They were Talha and Zubayr, both brothers-in-law of Ayesha, the widow of the Holy Prophet (S). However, to the great disadvantage of these two candidates, she was in Mecca for pilgrimage at the time.

The people of Medina, however, wanted Imam Ali (A) to be their Caliph. He was a man admired by his friends and enemies alike for his courage, piety, eloquence, wisdom and kinship to the Holy Prophet (S). After having been ruled by weak men the people now turned to the man who had been nominated to lead them in the first place. However, Imam Ali (A) refused their offer and said that he would rather remain as an advisor to any Caliph they elected.

The people of Medina insisted that they would follow none but him and at last he reluctantly agreed. He said,

> *"I must say frankly at the outset that I shall deal with you according to the Holy Qur'an and to the best of my knowledge and judgment."*

This condition was accepted, but Imam Ali (A) asked that his nomination be made in public so that if anyone had anything to say, they would have an opportunity to do so.

Next day in the mosque of Medina most of the Muslims were present to pay allegiance to Imam Ali (A), including Talha and Zubayr. Imam Ali (A) thus took over as the fourth Caliph of the Muslims.

The first matter that Imam Ali (A) attended to was replacing the worthless governors that were appointed by Othman. Most of the new governors took over their posts but the governor to Kufa was stopped from entering that city while Muawiyah's men stopped the governor to Syria and both had to return to Medina.

The second matter, that Imam Ali (A) attended, was the economy. The 25 previous years had created social and economical injustice in the Islamic nation. Imam Ali (A) made two major announcements:

1. All money and property that was taken illegally from the Islamic treasury must come back.
2. All money in the treasury, which was 300,000 dinars, will be distributed among all eligible Muslims (100,000 men in Medina). So each man received 3 dinars, including Imam Ali himself, Talha, Zubayr and everyone else.

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After a few days Talha and Zubayr and a few others came to Imam Ali (A) asking that the murder of Othman be avenged. Imam Ali (A) knew fully well that some of these same people had been responsible for the riots that led to Othman's death, and now they just wanted to stir up trouble. However, he told them that he had called Othman's wife Naila and his secretary Marwan and asked them if they could identify the culprits since they had been with Othman at the time of his death. Marwan did not come and Naila said that two men who she did not recognize had killed Othman. Under the circumstances Imam Ali (A) could do nothing more unless further evidence came to light.

Meanwhile, the members of Bani Umayyah, most of whom had not paid allegiance to Imam Ali (A), began to leave Medina. Imam Ali (A) knew that they were up to no good and in anticipation of future trouble, he began to secure the good will of the Quraish and Ansar in Medina.

The Bani Umayyah, with the help of their leader Muawiyah, began to stir up trouble for Imam Ali (A) and his government. In the mosque of Damascus, Muawiyah displayed the bloodstained shirt of Othman and the chopped-off fingers of his wife Naila, to incite the anger of the people. They swore that they would take revenge for Othman's death and Muawiyah began to blame Imam Ali (A) for doing nothing to bring the murderers to justice.

When his governors returned from Kufa and Syria, Imam Ali (A) wrote letters to Abu Musa Ash'ari in Kufa and Muawiyah in Syria demanding that they give way to the new governors.

Abu Musa wrote back from Kufa, stating that the Kufans were at the service of the new Caliph, but Muawiyah did not send a reply for three months. Finally, his messenger arrived with a letter. When Imam Ali (A) opened the letter it contained no words at all and was a gesture of outright defiance. In addition the messenger informed him that Muawiyah had gathered 60,000 men ready to avenge the murder of Othman on Imam Ali (A).

This news astonished Imam Ali (A) and he said,

"I call God to witness that I am not guilty and that it is a false charge."

The cunning Muawiyah had managed to rouse the hatred of the people of Syria against Imam Ali (A) by using Othman's murder as an excuse. However, Imam Ali (A) declared that only the sword would decide matters between Muawiyah and himself and he gave orders for an army to be gathered to march to Syria.

Meanwhile, Talha and Zubayr had plans of their own and proceeded to Mecca on the excuse of performing Umrah. Imam Ali (A) knew their intentions, and refused to give them permission to leave Medina. But after their insistence, Imam Ali (A) asked them to make a vow that if he let them go to Mecca, they would not stir trouble against his government. On the way they joined

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Ayesha the widow of the Holy Prophet (S) who was also using the death of Othman to create trouble for Imam Ali (A), whom she had always hated.

Thus, Imam Ali (A) was faced with a double threat to the security of his government - from Ayesha in Mecca and from Muawiyah in Syria.

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11.1 Worksheet: Caliphate of Imam Ali (a)

1. Two men had ambitions to become Caliph. They were:
    a. Imam Ali (a) and Talha
    b. Imam Ali (a) and Zubayr.
    c. Talha and Zubayr
    d. Muawiyah and Zubayr

2. The people of Medina wanted who to be their Caliph after Othman?
    a. Imam Ali (a)
    b. Zubayr
    c. Talha
    d. Muawiyah

3. Who made this statement, " I shall deal with you according to the Holy Qur'an and to the best of my knowledge and judgment".
    a. Muawiyah
    b. Ayesha
    c. Imam Ali (a)
    d. Zubayr

4. What was the first matter that Imam Ali (a) attended to when he became the Caliph?
    a. Agriculture
    b. Manufacturing
    c. Trade
    d. Replacing the corrupt governors appointed by Othman

5. What was the second matter that Imam Ali (a) attended to when he became the Caliph?
    a. Social and Economic injustice
    b. Agriculture
    c. Trade
    d. Inviting Muawiyah to visit Medina

6. Talha and Zubayr wanted to create problems for Imam Ali (a) and proceeded to Mecca under the pretext of performing Umrah.
    0 true
    0 false

7. Abu Musa the governor of Kufa wrote that Kufans would support Imam Ali (a).
    0 true

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0 false

8. Members of Bani Umayyah, whose leader was Muawiyah supported Imam Ali (a)
   0 true
   0 false

9. How did Muawiyah raise the hatred of people of Syria against Imam Ali (a)?

10. Why did Ayesha want to stir up trouble for Imam Ali (a)?

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Chapter 12: The Battle of Jamal

Ayesha, the widow of the Holy Prophet (S), was in Mecca for the pilgrimage when Othman was killed. She had always expected either Talha or Zubayr to succeed him and when she heard of Imam Ali's (A) appointment as Caliph, she was very upset.

Ayesha was a jealous and cunning woman, one who had caused the Holy Prophet (S) a lot of annoyance. Now she declared herself as the avenger of the murder of Othman and prepared to wage war against Imam Ali (A), whom she had always hated.

She managed to recruit the support of the powerful clan of Bani Umayyah, to whom Othman had belonged. The ex-governors of Othman, who had been replaced by Imam Ali (A), also joined her and the ex-governor of Yemen provided her with the means of financing her war by giving her the treasure he had stolen from Yemen when he was deposed. Talha and Zubayr also joined her, in spite of their oath of allegiance to Imam Ali (A). A large number of aimless drifters were also paid to enlist in the army.

The preparations of war having been completed, Ayesha's army proceeded to Basra. Before leaving, she had asked Umme Salma, a faithful widow of the Holy Prophet (S), to accompany her. Umme Salma had indignantly refused, reminding Ayesha that the Holy Prophet (S) had said that Imam Ali (A) was his successor and whoever disobeyed him, disobeyed the Holy Prophet (S) himself. She also reminded her of the time when he had addressed all his wives saying that the dogs of Hawab would bark at one of his wives, who would be part of a rebellious mob. She then warned Ayesha not to be fooled by the words of Talha and Zubayr who would only entangle her in wrong deeds. This advice had a sobering effect on Ayesha, who almost gave up her plan. However, her adopted son, Abdallah bin Zubayr, convinced her to go ahead.

Ayesha mounted on a litter on the camel al-Askar, and marched from Mecca at the head of 1,000 men. On her right was Talha and on her left, Zubayr. On their way many more joined them, swelling their numbers to 3,000.

On the way to Basra, the rebel army received news that Imam Ali (A) had come out of Medina in their pursuit. They decided to leave the main road and proceed to Basra through a different route. When they passed through the valley of Hawab the dogs of the village surrounded Ayesha's camel, barking loudly. She was immediately worried and asked for the name of the place. When she was told it was Hawab, she was shocked and she despairingly cried,

> *"Alas! Alas! I am the wretched woman of Hawab. The Prophet of Allah had already warned me against this."*

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She got off her camel and refused to go any further. Talha and Zubayr tried to convince her that the place was not Hawab and even brought 50 witnesses to testify to this lie, but in vain. Finally, they raised a cry that Imam Ali (A) was approaching, and Ayesha, struck with terror, quickly remounted and the march was resumed.

The army reached Basra and camped in the suburbs. Ayesha, Talha and Zubayr began talks with the leading citizens of Basra, trying to get their support for their cause. In this they failed and were subjected to ridicule.

Finally, some of them entered the city and during the congregational prayers, they treacherously captured Imam Ali's (A) governor, Othman bin Huneif, after killing 40 of his guards. Fighting broke out in the city and many of Imam Ali's (A) supporters were killed before Ayesha gained control of Basra. The governor, Othman, suffered the indignity of having his eyebrows, moustache and beard plucked out, hair by hair, before being turned out of the city.

Meanwhile, Imam Ali (A) had received information about Ayesha's plans from Umme Salma, and news of the disturbances in Mecca and Basra also came through.

Imam Ali (A) made immediate plans to march towards Basra but could only raise 900 men with difficulty. This was because the people were reluctant to fight Ayesha, who was considered to be the Mother of the Faithful by virtue of being the widow of the Holy Prophet (S). Also, Muawiyah had succeeded in making people think that Imam Ali (A) was somehow involved in the murder of Othman.

In Kufa, Imam Hassan (A) raised 9,000 men, and other units arrived as well, all joining Imam Ali (A) at his camp at Zhi-Q'ar. Meanwhile, Othman bin Huneif arrived with fresh news from Basra. Imam Ali (A) smiled and said to him that he had left them as an old man but had returned as a beardless youth.

Imam Ali (A) wrote letters to Ayesha, Talha and Zubayr, warning them against the unwise steps they had taken, but his words were ignored. Finally he marched to Basra at the head of 20,000 men.

Ayesha's forces numbered 30,000 but they were mostly raw recruits, while Imam Ali's army was full of battle veterans.

In Basra, the sight of Imam Ali's (A) men in battle formation filled Ayesha and her comrades with terror. Imam Ali (A) talked at length with Talha and Zubayr, negotiating for peace. He reminded them of the words of the Holy Prophet (S) regarding his authority, which they both admitted they had heard. Zubayr was ashamed of his deeds and left the scene but Talha remained doubtful.

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Ayesha was furious at the conduct of the two and ordered a raid at nighttime to end the chance of peace.

The next morning Ayesha mounted her camel al-Askar and urged her troops to prepare for battle. Thus began the unfortunate Battle of Jamal (Camel), where **Muslims fought each other for the first time**. Although outnumbered, Imam Ali (A) and his soldiers were too skilled to be defeated. Soon victory began to incline towards Imam Ali (A). Talha was wounded and later died. Ayesha's camel was brought down and Imam Ali (A) ordered his adopted son Muhammad bin Abu Bakr to take care of Ayesha who was his half-sister.

After that, the battle was soon over, and Imam Ali (A) declared a general amnesty for all the rebels.

Ayesha's plans had come to nothing and 10,000 men lay dead as a result of her jealousy. In this battle Imam Ali (A) restrained his men from taking any war booty and all property found on the battle ground was gathered in the mosque of Basra, from where the owners could claim their possessions.

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12.1 Worksheet: The Battle of Jamal

Mark the correct answer :

1. Ayesha the widow of the Holy Prophet (s) always expected which person to be the next Caliph?
    a. Imam Ali (a)
    b. Muawiyah
    c. Yazeed
    d. Talha or Zubayr

2. Who wanted to falsely avenge the murder of Othman, and prepared to wage a war against Imam Ali (a)?
    a. Zubayr
    b. Talha
    c. Ayesha
    d. Umme Salma

3. The ex-governor of Yemen provided what kind of help in this unjust battle?
    a. Men
    b. Moral support
    c. Means of financing

4. Who made this statement? “Alas! Alas! I am the wretched woman of Hawab. The Prophet of Allah had already warned me against this.”
    a. Ayesha
    b. Umme Salma
    c. A woman of the Bani Umayyah clan

5. Zubayr was ashamed of his deeds and left without participating in the war.
    0 true
    0 false

6. Muslims fought each other for the first time in this unfortunate Battle of Jamal.
    0 true
    0 false

7. After the battle was over Imam Ali (a) declared a general amnesty for all the rebels.
    0 true
    0 false

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Short Answer Questions:

8. State two reasons why initially Imam Ali's (a) army had only 900 men?

9. Why did Imam Ali (a) try negotiating for peace with Talha and Zubayr?

10. Why did Umme Salma, a faithful widow of the Holy Prophet (s), refuse to take any part in this battle of Jamal?

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Chapter 13: The Battle of Siffeen

After the battle of Jamal was over, Imam Ali (A) returned from Basra to Kufa in Rajab of 36 A.H. He decided to set up the capital of his government in Kufa because it was more centrally placed in the Muslim Empire, and he could halt Muawiyah's progress into Iraq.

Before marching towards Muawiyah, Imam Ali (A) tried to settle matters peacefully by sending Jarir, the governor of Hamdan, to Syria as an envoy. However, Jarir became so engrossed in the entertainment that Muawiyah put his way, that he wasted his time in Syria. He finally returned three months later with the useless message that peace could only be negotiated if the murderers of Othman were brought to justice.

Imam Ali (A) decided that matters could be only decided by war, so he marched without delay and crossed the Euphrates river. Later the army of Imam Ali (A) came into sight of Muawiyah's main forces, which had already camped at Siffeen.

At Siffeen, Muawiyah had stationed his general, Abul Awr, with 10,000 men on the river to stop the access to water for Imam Ali's (A) army. Imam Ali (A) sent a message to Muawiyah that this action was not necessary because, after all, the people whom he was refusing water were also Muslims. He further assured Muawiyah that if the situation had been reversed; the river would have been open to both armies. However, Muawiyah sent back a message that the murderers of Othman had not allowed him any water when they had laid siege to his palace, and Muawiyah was avenging that action.

Imam Ali (A) knew that this situation would be intolerable and he launched an attack under **Malike Ashtar**. The brave commander secured the river after heavy fighting and Abul Awr was dislodged from its banks. Having control of the river, Imam Ali (A) kept to his word and allowed unlimited access to Muawiyah's side.

Imam Ali (A) divided his army of 90,000 men into seven units each commanded by brave warriors. Muawiyah similarly divided his army of 120,000 men into seven columns. Everyday one column from each army would engage one another in combat.

The battles were mostly restricted to single combats or small groups fighting because Imam Ali (A) was trying to avoid the serious loss of Muslim lives that would have resulted from a full-scale battle. The month of Dhulhijjah ended in this manner and the month of Muharram, in which fighting is forbidden, set in. During this month, Imam Ali (A) tried hard to resolve the crisis by negotiation, but to no avail. He pointed out that he was ready to punish the murderers of Othman

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if Muawiyah would point them out. However, Muawiyah did not wish the matter to end so easily, because it was the issue of Othman's unavenged death that had enabled him to gather such a large army.

In the month of Safar fighting was resumed. For a week, fierce battles raged all day. Everyday the conflict got more severe and bitter. In the second week Imam Ali (A) came to the battlefield for the first time. After a series of single combats, in which he overcame every opponent with his awesome skill, no body would come to fight him.

He was forced to disguise himself to get anybody to challenge him. On one such occasion, an unsuspecting warrior from Muawiyah's side attacked Imam Ali (A). Imam Ali (A) struck the man with a single sweep of Dhulfiqar with such force that the upper half of his body was severed from the lower half. Those who watched thought that the blow had missed, and it was only when the horse moved and the two halves fell to the ground, that people realized what had happened.

Day after day the loss of lives increased, especially in the ranks of Muawiyah. However, Imam Ali (A) also lost several distinguished Companions of the Holy Prophet (S) from his side. Amongst them was **Ammar Bin Yasir**.

The Holy Prophet (S) had informed Ammar, who was 93 years old, that he would die fighting rebels and enemies of Islam. This was well known by all, and when he died there was some commotion in Muawiyah's army. He managed to subdue them by saying that, since Ammar had been brought to fight by Imam Ali (A), it was he who was the cause of his death. He said that Imam Ali (A) therefore was the rebel that the prophecy talked about, and not Muawiyah. This incredible argument was accepted by his men and war continued until the 13th night.

On that day the commander-in-chief of Imam Ali's (A) army, Malik e Ashtar, attacked the enemy ferociously. His shout of Allah u Akbar, every time he killed a man, was heard no less than 400 times.

The hero of the battle began to bring on victory when Amr al-Aas on Muawiyah's side said,

"Call the enemy to the Word of God."

Muawiyah eagerly accepted these words and his men raised 500 copies of the Holy Qur'an on their spears, saying that the Holy Book would decide their differences. This trick had a strange effect on some people in the army of Imam Ali (A), who dropped their weapons and agreed that the Holy Qur'an should decide the matter.

Imam Ali (A) stepped into the battlefield urging his men to continue fighting and ignore the tricks of Muawiyah, but they disobeyed. The war thus came to an unsatisfactory end, and it was decided that one representative from each side should meet to reach a final decision.

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Imam Ali (A) wanted Abdullah bin Abbas or Malik e Ashtar to represent him, but his men insisted that Abu Musa Ash'ari be chosen instead. Muawiyah appointed Amr al-Aas to represent him. Abu Musa had neither wit nor tact and was no match for the cunning Amr al-Aas.

In the meeting that took place some months later, Abu Musa was badly tricked by Amr into giving up the rights of Imam Ali (A).

Muawiyah thus managed to escape certain defeat at Siffeen. The damage done at the battle was great. Muawiyah lost 45,000 men and 25,000 men were killed on the side of Imam Ali (A).

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13.1 Worksheet: Battle of Siffeen

Choose the correct answer:

1. Where did Imam Ali (a) decide to set up the capital of his government?

    a. Medina
    b. Kufa
    c. Mecca
    d. Syria

2. Why did Muawiyah station his general, Abu Awr with 10,000 men on the Euphrates River?

    a. To make sure the soldiers had access to water
    b. To have a fertile feeding ground for the horses
    c. To make sure that Imam Ali's (a) army has no access to water.
    d. To lay claims on the land surrounding the river.

3. The shouts of "Allah Akbar" by Malik e Ashtar were heard how many times on the battlefield?

    a. 200
    b. 300
    c. 400
    d. 500

4. Why did Muawiyah's army raise 500 copies of the Holy Qur'an on their spears?

    a. Holy Book would decide their differences
    b. Muawiyah's army was surrendering
    c. They wanted to negotiate for peace
    d. They wanted Imam Ali (a) to be their leader instead of Muawiyah.

5. Imam Ali (a) allowed Muawiyah's army unlimited access to the waters of the Euphrates.
    a. True
    b. False

6. Malik e Ashtar was the brave commander of Imam Ali's army.

    a. True

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b. False

7. At the end of the war Imam Ali's (a) army lost 25,000 men and Muawiyah's army lost ---------- men.

8. Who was Imam Ali (s) representative in the peace negotiations?

   a. Abdullah bin Abbas
   b. Malik e Ashtar
   c. Abu Musa
   d. Jarir the governor of Hamdan

Short Answer Questions:

9. Why did Muawiyah reject all efforts by Imam Ali (a) of peace negotiations?

10. Why was there a commotion in Muawiyah's army at the death of Ammar Bin Yasir, a distinguished companion of the Holy Prophet (s)?

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Chapter 14: The Battle of Nahrawan

After the unsatisfactory conclusion to the Battle of Siffeen, Imam Ali (A) returned with his army back to Kufa on the 13th of Safar 37 A.H. During the march, a group of 12,000 men kept themselves at a distance from the main part of the army.

The group was furious at the way things had ended at Siffeen. These were the Kharjites (Kharjite means one who rebels against religion). They were the same people who had put down their weapons on the battlefield. Now they said that Imam Ali (A) had betrayed Islam by agreeing to the truce and should have referred judgment to the Holy Qur'an alone or continued to fight. They demanded that he repent for this great sin.

When the army neared Kufa, the Kharjites camped at a village named Harura. They started saying that all Muslims were equal and nobody could rule over the other. In this way, they denounced both Imam Ali (A) and Muawiyah and said that their belief was in *"La Hukma Illa Lillah",* meaning, *"No Rulership except by Allah alone."*

Imam Ali (A) went to their camp and tried to explain to them that they were misunderstanding the words "*La Hukma Illa Lillah*", and that in accepting the arbitration (peace talks) at Siffeen, he had not gone against the teachings of the Holy Qur'an.

He pointed out that they themselves were at fault, because they should never have laid down their arms and forced him to call back Malik e Ashtar, who was at the point of securing victory. He reminded them that they had pressed for the arbitration and had forced him to appoint Abu Musa Ash'ari as their representative. He told them that he found their present behavior very strange, considering their involvement in Siffeen. To this they admitted that they had sinned but now they had repented for it and he should do the same.

Imam Ali (A) replied that he was a true believer and did not have to repent because he had not committed any sin.

The Kharjites refused to accept the words of Imam Ali (A) and awaited the decision of Amr al-Aas and Abu Musa Ash'ari. When they learnt of the decision they decided to revolt, and they set up their headquarters at Nahrawan, a few miles from Baghdad. Some people came from Basra to join the rebels.

Meanwhile, Imam Ali (A) received news that trouble was brewing in Nahrawan. He was involved in raising another army to march against Muawiyah and wrote to the Kharjites that it was high

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time they joined his army. However, the Kharjites insultingly wrote back that they would think about it when he repented for his mistake at Siffeen.

Imam Ali (A) had already started towards Muawiyah when he received the news that the Kharjites had raided the town of Mada'in but had been repelled back to their camp. They were now committing horrible crimes around Nahrawan and killing all those who did not accept their viewpoint.

There was a danger that the Kharjites might attack Kufa while Imam Ali (A) and his men were marching towards Muawiyah, so Imam Ali (A) decided to stop them. He changed his course eastward, crossed the river Tigris and approached Nahrawan.

Imam Ali (A) sent a messenger to the Kharjites demanding that those people who had murdered innocent Muslims around their camp should surrender. The Kharjites replied that they were all equally responsible for killing these sinners.

There was some reluctance in the army of Imam Ali (A) to fight the Kharjites, because they had been their companions against Muawiyah at Siffeen. Imam Ali (A) himself did not desire the bloodshed of these misguided fanatics, so he placed his battle standard outside their camp and announced that all those who gathered around it or returned to their homes would be safe.

This announcement had the desired effect and most of the Kharjites began to leave. In the end, only a core of 1,800 die-hards was left under the command of Abdallah bin Wahab. These Kharjites swore that they would fight Imam Ali (A) at any cost.

The Kharjites attacked Imam Ali's (A) army with desperate courage. However, they did not stand a chance against the superior army that faced them and they were all killed except nine men. These nine managed to flee to Basra and elsewhere, where they spread the fire of their hatred and recruited more followers. Three years later, in 40 A.H., it was the Kharjites who sent out three assassins to kill Imam Ali (A), Muawiyah and Amr al-Aas. The latter two survived but Imam Ali (A) was martyred following Ibne Muljam's cowardly attack in the mosque of Kufa.

Having disposed of the Kharjites at Nahrawan, Imam Ali (A) resumed his march to Syria. However, the chiefs of his followers urged him to stop at Kufa to let the men rest before the long journey and to enable the army to repair their weapons and armors. Imam Ali (A) agreed to this request and camped at Nukhayla outside Kufa. The soldiers were allowed to leave the camp for a day.

On the next day, hardly any men returned and at length, Imam Ali (A) entered Kufa and gave a stern sermon to the people. However, nobody came forward and finally, Imam Ali (A) turned away from them in disappointment. The Syrian expedition was abandoned, and never to be resumed.

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14.1 Worksheet: The Battle of Nahrawan

1. A Kharjite is _____

2. Kharjites believed Imam Ali (A) had committed a sin by
   _____
   _____

3. The Kharjites main belief about leadership was
   _____
   _____
   _____

4. According to the Kahrjites, “La hukma illa lillah” means
   _____
   _____
   _____

5. Imam Ali (A) believed the Kharijites committed a sin by
   _____
   _____
   _____

6. Imam Ali (A) was going towards Muawiyah for battle but changed his direction because of
   _____
   _____
   _____

7. Why was there some reluctance in the army of Imam Ali (A) to fight the Kharjites?

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_____
_____
_____

8. Instead of directly fighting with the Kharjites, Imam Ali (A) did what?

_____
_____
_____

9. Was Imam Ali (A) able to complete the exchange with the Kharjites without a battle?

_____
_____
_____

10. The remaining Kharjites were responsible for what horrid act?

_____
_____
_____
_____

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Chapter 15: The Martyrdom of Imam Ali (a)

After Imam Ali (A) became the Caliph of the Muslims, he had to fight many battles. The last of these was the Battle of Nahrawan, against the Kharjites. These were the people who had deserted the Holy Imam (A) because they thought he had been too lenient with Muawiyah at Siffeen. After their defeat they went to Mecca, where they plotted the assassination of the Holy Imam (A), Muawiyah and Amr al-Aas. Amr was Muawiyah's close advisor and his governor in Egypt and they feared that he would claim the Caliphate after the death of Muawiyah. By these murders the Kharjites thought that they could bring order to the Muslim empire. Accordingly, Abdur Rahman ibne Muljam agreed to kill the Holy Imam (A), Burak bin Abdallah Tymi to kill Muawiyah and Amr bin Bakr Tymi to kill Amr al-Aas.

The morning of Friday the 19th of Mah e Ramadhan was fixed for the execution. The three assassins poisoned their swords and set off towards Kufa, Damascus and Egypt. The man sent to Egypt was killed before he could approach Amr al-Aas. The second man, Burak, reached Damascus and actually struck at Muawiyah but missed, and was killed before he could do him any harm. However, the man sent to kill the Holy Imam (A) reached Kufa safely and stationed himself in the mosque of Kufa on the night of the 19th of Mah e Ramadhan.

The Holy Imam (A) had prophesied his departure from this world several days beforehand. When he left the house, his chickens began making a great noise and when one of his servants attempted to quieten them, the Holy Imam (A) said, "Leave them alone, for their cries are only in grief of my approaching death."

On the morning of the 19th of Mah e Ramadhan, the Holy Imam (A) went to the mosque of Kufa and began to wake up all the people sleeping there. Ibne Muljam was lying on his stomach so as to hide the sword, and the Holy Imam (A) woke him up as well, telling him not to sleep on his stomach, as that was the way of Shaytan. After giving the Adhaan, the Holy Imam (A) led the prayer and Ibne Muljam, pretending to pray, stood behind him. When the Holy Imam (A) was in the state of prostration, Ibne Muljam dealt a heavy stroke with his sword on the Holy Imam's (A) head. The Prophet (S) had foretold the assassination of the Holy Imam (A) and his children and had said, "O Ali, I see before my eyes your beard dyed with the blood of your forehead".

The murderer was caught and brought to the Holy Imam (A) and when the Holy Imam (A) saw that the ropes tied to him were cutting his flesh, he forgot his own agony and requested that Ibne Muljam should be treated more humanely. Touched by these words the murderer started to weep.

A smile played on the Holy Imam's (A) lips and in a faint voice he said, "It is too late to repent now, you have done your deed. Was I a bad Imam or an unkind ruler?" This conduct was typical

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of the Holy Imam (A), whose justice was always tempered with mercy, even to the worst of his enemies.

The Holy Imam (A) was taken home from the mosque. During his last hours, Asbagh bin Nabata, one of his companions, visited him and asked him for some words of advice. The Holy Imam (A) replied, "O Asbagh, what can be greater counsel than the fact that yesterday I was your companion, today I am your guest and tomorrow I will only be a memory."

His last words to his sons were, "Remain steadfast in piety and resign yourself to the Will of Allah. Never aspire to anything that is beyond your reach. Always be truthful and merciful towards the orphans. Help the poor and needy and try to live in the world in a way which may help it to become better."

He also instructed them to carry his coffin from behind only, as unseen hands would carry the front. He told them to take the route guided by the coffin itself. At the place where the coffin would stop, they would find a grave already dug for him. He also requested his sons that he should be buried secretly, because he feared his enemies might desecrate his grave.

On the 21st of Mah e Ramadhan in 40 A.H. the Holy Imam (A) departed this world. He was 63 years old at the time. After washing and shrouding his body, his two sons Imam Hassan (A) and Imam Hussein (A) carried the coffin. The coffin stopped at Najaf, which is about four miles from Kufa. Here they found a grave already prepared with a message in it saying: "This grave has been dug by Prophet Nuh (A) for the Commander of the Faithful, Ali (A)."

The Holy Imam (A) was buried in this grave. Until recently, the shrine of the Holy Imam (A) at Najaf was breathtaking. Countless number of people from all over the world used to flock to his tomb day after day to pay their respects and to offer salutations. Here they prayed to Allah seeking the Holy Imam's (A) intercession.

Today the tomb has been demolished by the evil Saddam Hussein who has destroyed all the holy shrines in Najaf and Kerbala and committed enormous crimes against innocent people, especially the Shia. May Allah cut short the life of this cruel tyrant and send him to everlasting Hell.

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15.1 Worksheet: The Martyrdom of Imam Ali (a)

1. The last battle fought by Imam Ali (A) was The Battle of

2. The people who deserted Imam Ali (A) and fought in The Battle of Nahrawan were called the

3. Imam Ali (A) left his home on 19 of Ramadan knowing he would

4. Why did Imam Ali (A) say sleeping on the stomach is a way of Shaitan?

5. Name 3 main things the Imam said to his children before his death.

    1.

    2.

    3.

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6. The date Imam Ali (A) died was

7. Imam Hassan (A) and Imam Hussein (A) carried Imam Ali's (A) coffin to the city of_____ and buried him in a grave prepared by

8. An important lesson Imam Ali (A) taught humans was to forgive people. Give an example from this story in which the Imam forgave someone.

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SECTION II: Special Occasions

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Chapter 16: Imam Hussein (a) & the Events at Kerbala

[*by Dr. Hamid Algar, Univ. of California, Berkeley, USA, 27th September, 2001* and excerpts from 'Karbala' by Ramzan Sabir (al-islam .org)]

- Imam Hussein (a), the son of Imam Ali (a), was born on the 3rd of Sha'ban, 4 AH (626 CE). Like his brother Hassan (a), the Imam was very close to his grandfather, the Prophet (s), and resembled him in appearance. His name was given to him by the Prophet (s). The Prophet (s) recited Adhaan in his ear at birth, and foretold the fate of the Imam (a) at Kerbala, calling him "Sayyid ash-shuhada".

- After the death of the Prophet (s), Imam Hassan (a) and Hussein (a) did not participate in Islamic affairs during the reign of the first three caliphs. They did however; guard the house of Uthman when his house was under siege by Muslims. During the caliphate of their father Imam Ali (a), the 2nd and 3rd Imams participated in all the battles.

- Between the death of the 2nd Imam in 49 AH and the death of Muawiyah, Imam Hussein (a) continued to live a quiet life, even when Yazeed was nominated and the treaty between Muawiyah and Imam Hassan (a) violated. A number of delegations from Kufa came to Medina with a pledge to support Imam Hussein (a), and requested him to rise up against the Umayyads. One of these supporters known as Hujr b. 'Ali, rose against the Umayyad ritual of cursing Imam Ali (a). While he was swiftly captured and killed, it indicated a growth of Shia resistance to the caliphate. After the murder of Hujr, Muawiyah warned Imam Hussein (a) not to support any of these uprisings. The Imam (a) replied that this was not his goal. Why did the Imam (a) not support any of these uprisings? For two main reasons:
1) Imam (a) believed that the treaty of his brother continued to be legally binding.
2) Imam (a) acknowledged the unequal balance of support between his followers and Muawiyah's men, as well as the fickle nature of many Shias who betrayed both his father and brother.

- 56 AH: Muawiyah appointed Yazeed as his successor, violating the terms of the treaty with Imam Hassan (a). Yazeed was utterly irreligious, openly drinking and mocking Islamic beliefs, so much so that Muawiyah himself expressed concern about his nomination. Four years before his own death though, Muawiyah demanded that Muslims give allegiance to Yazeed. Those that refused to do so were the son of Abu Bakr, Abdullah ibn Umar, Abdullah ibn Zubayr, and Imam Hussein (a). Muawiyah was unsuccessful in forcing their allegiances during his lifetime. In 60 AH when Yazeed came to power, he instructed the new governor of Medina Walid b. 'Utba, to force an allegiance out of the four, especially Abdullah ibn Zubayr and Imam Hussein (a). Imam Hussein (a) flatly refused to accept Yazeed either as a Caliph or a leader of Islam. When he refused to give his allegiance even at the repeated insistence of Walid, Yazeed

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commanded Walid to get an allegiance or to kill the Imam (a). Walid replied that he would never kill the Imam (a), no matter how much wealth he received in return.

16.1 Journey of Imam Hussein (a) from Medina to Iraq

- A few days later, after Imam Hussein (a) had openly declared to Yazeed that a man like himself could never give allegiance to a man like Yazeed, on the 20th of Rajab 60AH, Imam Hussein (a) left for Mecca. He left with all his family and many of his friends. At hearing this, many Kufans invited the Imam to come to Kufa, and offered their help in fighting Yazeed. But the Imam (a) was aware of their unreliability and fickle nature. He instead sent them letters outlining his role as an Imam, and agreeing to come only if they allow his to carry out his true purpose. In addition to the letters, Imam Hussein (a) sent his cousin Muslim b. 'Aqil to Kufa to assess the situation. In the mean time Yazeed spread a network of informants and secret agents in Mecca to assassinate the Imam during pilgrimage. Imam learned about the spies, and carefully evaluated the situation in Mecca. Imam Hussein (a) knew that Yazeed son of Muawiyah had no regard for Islamic values and teachings, that he would do anything to enforce his tyrannical rule. Imam Hussein (a) also knew that giving allegiance of loyalty to an imposter like Yazeed would certainly place Islam at great jeopardy. Therefore he decided to leave Mecca for Kufa to prepare for a confrontation with Yazeed and his forces.

- On the 5th of Sha'ban, Muslim b. 'Aqil arrived in Kufa. At the time around 12,000 to 30,000 Kufans gave him their allegiances. However Yazeed replaced the current Kufan with a new governor known as Ubaydallah b. Ziyad. Ubaydallah began threatening and persecuting those who supported Muslim bin Aqeel. Gradually the number of supporters dwindled, as some were bought over by Ubaydallah and others became tired or afraid, leaving hardly any devotees. Then Muslim b 'Aqil's place of hiding was betrayed, and on the 8th or 9th of Dhulhijjah he was martyred. This was the same day that Imam Hussein (a) left from Mecca for Kufa, as he had yet only received positive letters from Muslim b 'Aqil reporting the favorable events in Kufa. On his way, however, the Imam (a) met Farazdaq the poet, who said about the people of Kufa "their hearts are with you, but their swords are with the Umayyads".

- Soon thereafter Imam Hussein (a) was informed of his cousin's death and other prominent Shias in Kufa. Despite this, Imam (a) continued on his way to Iraq, while he informed his followers they were free to leave him if they wanted. He arrived in Kerbala on the 2nd of Muharram, 61AH. He was compelled under the command of Hurr b. Yazeed and 1000 of his men, to set up camp in an unprotected area without direct access to water. Soon the army of Umar b. Sa'd arrived, bringing the total of the enemy to 5000 men. Imam's (a) army consisted of 72 people. At first Umar b. Sa'd said that if Imam (a) agreed to swear allegiance he could return to Mecca. Imam Hussein (a) refused. Umar b. Sa'd was still reluctant to take action, and as a result the leadership was given to

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Shamir (commonly known as Shimr), who had fought with Imam Ali (a) in battle of Siffin. On the 7th of Muharram basic needs like water were denied to Imam Hussein (a) and his supporters.

16.2 Ashura

- On the 10th of Muharram (Ashura) Imam made a final appeal to the army of Yazeed, not to save his own life, but to allow the soldiers to redeem themselves and prevent them from carrying out the heinous crimes they were about to commit. Upon their refusal, the battle began. It lasted less than a day, and began in the traditional manner with single combat between the two sides. At noon 2 major assaults were carried out against the Imam's (a) camp, which while very small in number, presented stiff resistance. One after the other, his followers were killed. Then the family members of the Imam (a) were killed; his son 'Ali Akbar, the sons of Muslim b. 'Aqil, a son of Imam Ali (a), the sons of Imam Hassan (a). Eventually only Imam Hussein (a) and his brother Abbas were left. When Abbas too was martyred, Imam bid a final farewell to his family. Some of the soldiers in Yazeed's army continued to be reluctant to kill the Imam, but when Imam (a) fell to the ground, a man by the name of Sinan carried out the murder. The army then proceeded to trample upon the body of the Imam (a), and beheaded the bodies of all the martyrs.

- There remained from the family of Imam Hussein (a) only one male who was very sick at the time, his son Imam Zain ul 'Abideen (a). Imam Zain ul 'Abideen (a) who took on the role of the Imam at the death of his father, was taken with the women who remained, first to Syria and then eventually to their homes in Medina. The heads of the martyrs were taken to Syria. It was not until 2 or 3 days after Ashura that local tribesmen buried the bodies of the martyrs in a mass grave.

16.3 Conclusions

- Among the general Muslim community there was no serious reaction or outcry against the actions of the caliphate that had murdered the grandson of the Prophet(s), less then 50 years after the death of the Prophet(s).

- The events of Kerbala had a very important impact on Shia view of early Islamic history. Sunni Islam, with its belief in the general virtue of all the companions, often idealizes the first century of Islam, and looks to it to provide an ideal of model worthy of imitation. Shia Islam, on the other hand, recognizes that the events in the Muslim community after the death of the

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Prophet (s) were far from ideal. Rather early Islam was inaugurated by tragedy, and should not be seen as a model to be imitated. Combined with the belief in the coming of the 12th Imam, Shias instead look to the future for a time when Islam will be established throughout the world.

- Finally Ashura became an extremely important date, both for its historical events, and the symbols for which the battle between Imam Hussein (a) and Yazeed stand for, i.e. the continual struggle between justice and injustice. Thus a hadith of the 6th Imam says, "Every day is Ashura, every land is Kerbala". Prior to 61AH there were numerous events associated with Ashura that occurred during the times of earlier Prophets, but the events of Kerbala took precedence over all these other events.

- Kerbala is the cruelest tragedy humanity has ever seen. Yet, the startling (though appalling) events in Kerbala proved like a powerful volcano that shook the very foundation of Muslims, it stirred their consciousness, ignorant or learned alike. For sincere Muslims, Kerbala turned into a triumph. The tragic event became the very beacon of light to always remind Muslims to practice Islam honestly and sincerely, to do what is right irrespective of consequences, and fear no one except Allah (swt).

- On the other hand, Yazeed never achieved what he and his father had planned to achieve, for within three years, Allah's wrath fell upon him, causing him to die at the age of 33 years. And within a few decades the rule of Banu Umayyah crumbled and came to an end. The tragedy of Kerbala taught humanity a lesson; that standing for the truth and fighting unto death for it, is more honorable and valuable than submitting to the wrong, especially when the survival of Islam is at stake.

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16.4 Worksheet: Imam Hussein (a) and the Events at Kerbala

Write whether true or false:

1. After the death of the Prophet (s), Imam Hassan (a) and Hussein (a) did not participate in Islamic affairs during the reign of the first three caliphs.
2. They refused to guard the house of Uthman when his house was under siege by Muslims.
3. During the caliphate of their father Imam Ali (a), the 2nd and 3rd Imams were too young to participate in any battles.
4. Between the death of the 2nd Imam in 49 AH and the death of Muawiyah, Imam Hussein (a) continued to live a quiet life, even when Yazeed was nominated.
5. There were signs that of Shia resistance against Muawiyah.
6. Those that refused to pledge allegiance to Yazeed were the son of Abu Bakr, Abdullah ibn Umar, Abdullah ibn Zubayr, and Imam Hussein (a).

Choose the correct answer:

1) Imam Hussein (a) sent his cousin Muslim b. 'Aqil to Kufa
   a) To assess the situation
   b) Because he was aware of the fickle nature of the Kufi people
   c) Because Muslim was eager to see Kufa
   d) Both a) and b)

2) Gradually the number of Muslim's supporters dwindled because
   a) Some were bought over by Ubaydallah
   b) Some did not know who Muslim was really representing
   c) Some became tired or afraid
   d) Both a) and c)

3) The Imam (a) found out about the death of Muslim
   a) In Mecca, before he left for Kufa
   b) On his way to Kufa
   c) When he got to Kerbala
   d) When he arrived in Kufa

4) Imam Hussein (a) was commanded to set up camp
   a) In an unprotected area without direct access to water
   b) Outside of Kerbala
   c) In Kufa
   d) In an area full of wild trees and poisonous bushes

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Short essay question:

Describe the major events that took place after Imam's (a) arrival in Kerbala.

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Chapter 17: Ali Akbar (a) – Son of Imam Hussein(a)

Ali Akbar (a) was Imam Hussein's (a) older son. His handsome looks were matched by his handsome deeds. His nobility of character, his sense of duty, his generosity, his chivalry, his geniality, his love of justice and fair play had endeared him to every soul. It was a well-known fact amongst the Arabs throughout Hijaz that Ali Akbar (a) bore a remarkable resemblance to the Holy Prophet. In looks, in voice, in mannerism, in every way, he resembled the Prophet. The resemblance was so marked that people from far and wide came to see him, to be reminded of the Prophet whom they missed so much. Those who had not had the good fortune to see the Prophet were told by their elders that Ali Akbar (a) was the very image of Muhammad (s), may Peace of Allah be on Him.

When Imam Hussein (a) refused Yazeed's bayat and decided to leave Medina, a delegation approached Hussein (a) to dissuade him from undertaking his journey. Their leader, with supplication in his faltering voice, besought Hussein to tell them why he had decided to leave them and the Prophet's tomb for which he had so much attachment.

"O Son of the Prophet, if we have displeased you in any way, please forgive us."

At this display of love and affection Hussein was moved to tears. Suppressing his grief he replied:

"My dear brethren, believe me that my heart is bleeding at this parting, parting from you and from the graves of my beloved grandfather, my dearest mother and my brother, whom I held dearer than my life. Had it not been for the call of duty, I assure you I would have abandoned the idea of leaving Medina. It grieves me most that I cannot for once grant you your wishes when you all love me so dearly. But Almighty Allah has so willed it and in His divine dispensation ordained that I should undertake this journey. I know what hardships await me; but the Prophet has groomed me from my childhood to face them."

The representatives of the people of Medina then requested Hussein (a) to grant them one wish and leave Ali Akbar (a) behind in Medina.

"O Hussein," they said, "we cannot bear the thought of parting with your son Ali Akbar. He is the very image of the Prophet. Whenever we feel overcome by the remembrance of Muhammad, we go to Ali Akbar to have a look at him and take comfort. We shall look after him better than we look after our own sons. We promise that we shall treat his every wish as a command. In fair weather and foul we shall stand by him. Even if we die, we shall command our children as our dying wish to attend to all his comforts and needs. His exemplary life has been an object lesson for our sons who are devoted to him as if he were their brother."

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This sincere and earnest pleading made Hussein (a) momentarily speechless. He replied to them in a tone tinged with pathos,

“Alas, I only wish I could entrust my Ali Akbar to your care! In my mission he has to play a role, the importance of which time alone will tell. I cannot accede to your request for reasons that I cannot reveal to you; but rest assured that I shall always remember your kindness to me. I shall carry with me vivid memories of this parting and remember you in my prayers.”

And so when the heavens were glowing with the last rays of day, the caravan left on its long-drawn journey to the unknown destination.

Meandering through the desert, the caravan had reached the destination that Allah had willed for it. With the dawn of the 10th day of the month of Muharram the events, started unfolding themselves.

One by one the faithful followers went out to fight for the cause of Islam and in the process faced death. With his devoted supporters engulfed in death, the turn of Hussein's (a) sons and brothers and nephews came.

Ali Akbar (a) went over to his father to ask his permission to go out into that gory arena from which no person from his camp had returned. Hussein (a) looked at his face; it would be more correct to say that for a couple of minutes his stare was fixed on that face which he loved so much; which reminded him every time of his grandfather whom he resembled every inch. He tried to say something but his voice failed him. With considerable effort he whispered with downcast eyes:

“Akbar, I wish you had become a father; then you would have known what I am experiencing at this moment. My son, how can a father ask his son to go, when he knows that the parting would be forever! But Akbar, the call of duty makes me helpless in this matter. Go to your mother, and to your Aunt Zainab who has brought you up from childhood and loved you and cared for you more than for her own sons, and seek their permission.”

Ali Akbar (a) entered the tent of his Aunt Zainab (a). He found her and his mother Umme Laila. Zainab (a) broke the silence with an exclamation:

“Oh God, can it be true that Akbar has come to bid me and his mother the last farewell Akbar do not say that you are ready for the last journey. So long as my sons Awn and Muhammad are there, it is impossible for me to let you go.”

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Akbar knew what love and affection his aunt Zainab (a) had for him. He was conscious of the pangs of sorrow she was experiencing at that moment. Her affection for him transcended everything except her love for Hussein (a). He looked at her face, and at his mother's who was rendered speechless by her surging feelings of anguish. He knew not how to tell them that he had prepared himself for the journey to Heaven that lay ahead. He summoned to his aid his most coaxing manners that had always made his mother and Zainab (a) accede to his requests and said:

“My aunt, for all my father's kinsmen the inevitable hour has come. I implore you, by the love you bear for your brother, to let me go so that it may not be said that he spared me till all his brothers and nephews were killed. Abbas, my uncle, is Commander of our army. The others are all younger than me. When death is a certainty, let me die first so that I can quench my thirst at the heavenly spring of Kawthar at the hands of my grandfather.”

The earnestness of Akbar's (a) tone convinced Zainab (a) and his mother that he was determined to go. It seemed to be his last wish to lay down his life before all his kinsmen. Since on no other occasion they had denied him his wishes, it seemed so difficult to say no to his last desire. With a gasp Zainab (a) could only say,

“Akbar, my child, if the call of death has come to you, go.”

His mother could only say:

“May God be with you my son. With you I am losing all I had and cared for in this world. Your father has told me what destiny has in store for me. After you, for me pleasure and pain will have no difference.”

When Akbar (a) approached Hussein (a), there was no need for him to say that he had bid farewell to his mother and Aunt Zainab (a), for the sorrow depicted on his face spoke volumes to Hussein (a). Silently he rose and put the Prophet's turban on Akbar's (a) head, tied the scabbard on his waist and imprinted a kiss on his forehead. In a failing, faltering voice he muttered:

“Go Akbar, God is there to help you.”

Treading heavily, Akbar (a) came out of the tent with Hussein following closely behind him and marched towards the battlefield. He was now facing the enemy horses. He addressed the forces of Amr Ibne Saad with an eloquence that he had inherited from his Grandfather and the Prophet. He was telling them that Hussein, his father, had done them no harm and had devoted his life to the cause of Islam. He was explaining to them that by shedding the blood of

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Hussein and his kinsmen they would be incurring the wrath of God and displeasure of the Prophet. He was exhorting them not to smear their hands with the blood of a person so holy, so God-fearing and so righteous. His words cast a spell on the army of the opponents. The older ones from amongst them were blinking their eyes in amazement and wondering whether the Prophet had descended from the Heavens to warn them against the shedding of Hussein's blood. What a resemblance there was with the Prophet, in face, features and even mannerism! Even the voice was of Muhammad!

Seeing the effect which Ali Akbar's (a) address had produced on his soldiers, Amr Saad exhorted them to challenge him to single combat. A few of them, desiring the honor and rewards they would get if they overpowered and killed this brave son of Hussein, emaciated by three days of hunger and thirst, came forward to challenge him. One by one he met them in battle, gave them a taste of his skill and prowess in fighting and flung them from their horseback to meet the doom they so much deserved. Now it was his turn to challenge the warriors of Yazeed to come forward. Seeing that he was capable of displaying valor and battle craft for which his grandfather Ali (a) had been famous for and which had struck terror into the hearts of enemies of Islam, none dared to come forward.

Ali Akbar (a) had received several gaping wounds in the course of his victorious single combats. He was fast losing blood and the effect of his thirst was getting accentuated with every second that was passing. He realized that the treacherous enemies would attack him en masse. He had left his mother in a dazed condition. An irresistible urge to see his dear ones for the last time seized him and he turned his horse towards his camp.

He found his father standing at the doorstep of the tent and his mother and aunt standing inside the tent. Hussein (a) had been watching the battles of this thirsty youth and the two ladies were watching his face: they knew that if any calamity befell Ali Akbar (a), Hussein's (a) expression would indicate it. Whilst watching Hussein's (a) face, they were both praying offering silent prayers:

“O Allah, Who brought back Isma’il to Hajirah; O Allah, Who granted the prayers of the mother Musa and restored her son to her; O Allah, Who reunited Yakub with his son Yusuf in response to the aged father's supplications, grant us our one wish to see Ali Akbar for once.” Was it the effect of these prayers that brought back Ali Akbar to the camp?

Ali Akbar (a) was now facing his aged father and his loving mother and Zainab (a). With an exclamation of joy and relief they clung to him. Hussein (a) lovingly embraced his son saying:

“Bravo, my son. The gallantry you how displayed today reminded me of the battles of my revered father, Ali. The only difference was that, during his fights, my father Ali had not to battle against hunger and thirst as you have to.”

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Ali Akbar's (a) second parting was sad as the first one, perhaps sadder. Every one realized that this was the last time they were beholding Akbar. Hussein (a) followed Ali Akbar (a) out of the tent. As he rode away, Hussein (a) walked behind him with a brisk pace for some distance, as a man follows his sacrificial lamb in Mina. When Akbar (a) disappeared from his sight, he turned heavenwards and, with his hands raised, he prayed:

"O Allah, Thou art my Witness that on this day I have sent away for sacrifice one whom I loved and cherished most, to defend the cause of righteousness and truth."

He sat on the ground as if trying to listen expectantly to some call from the battlefield. It was not very long before he received a wailing call, a call from Ali Akbar (a), a call of anguish and pain:

"Father, Akbar has fallen with a mortal wound in his chest. Father, come to me for I have not long to live. If you cannot reach me, I convey my last salutations to you and my dear ones."

Though Hussein (a) was anticipating such a call, what a ghastly effect it had on him! He rose from the ground and fell; he rose again and fell again. With one hand on his heart he struggled to his feet. Torrential tears were flooding his eyes. He rushed in the direction from which the cry had come. It seemed as Hussein's (a) strength had ebbed away on hearing that fateful cry of his dearest son, for he was falling at every few steps. He was sobbing:

"Akbar, give me another shout so that I can follow its direction. Akbar, my sight is gone with the shock I have received and there is nobody to guide me to where you lie."

Abbas (a) came rushing to the aid of his master. Holding his hand he led him on to the place from where Akbar's (a) dying cry had come.

Akbar (a) was lying in a pool of his own blood. With one hand on his chest covering a deep wound from which blood was gushing out, with his face writhing with pain, Akbar (a) was prostrate and unconscious. His thirst and the agony he was enduring on account of the wound, made his feet dig into the sand. With a cry of anguish Hussein (a) fell on the body of Akbar (a).

On seeing his beloved son breathe his last in his own hands, Hussein (a) for quite some time remained there weeping. Abbas (a) sat by his side shedding tears. What words of consolation could he offer when the tragedy was of such a magnitude?

When Hussein (a) reached the camp he laid down Akbar's (a) body on the ground. The ladies came and all flung themselves on the body, lamenting profusely.

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Hussein (a) sat for a few minutes near the dead body of his son, dazed with grief. He was awakened from his stupor by Qasim (a), the son of his brother, who had come to seek his permission to go to the battlefield. He rose from the ground, wiped the tears from his aged eyes and muttered

“Verily from God we come, and unto Him is our return.”

Reference:
Tears and Tributes by Zakir
Shaheed Associates, Hyderabad, India
5th Revised Edition - 1980

Contributed by Br. Ali Abbas
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17.1 Worksheet: Ali Akbar (a) - Son of Imam Hussein (a)

Choose the correct answer

1. Ali Akbar (a) was Imam _____ older son.

    a. Hassan's (a)
    b. Ali's (a)
    c. Hussein's (a)
    d. Zain ul Abideen's (a)

2. It was a well-known fact amongst the Arabs throughout Hijaz that Ali Akbar (a) bore a remarkable resemblance to …….

    a. Imam Ali (a)
    b. The Holy Prophet (s)
    c. Lady Fatemah Zahra (a)
    d. Imam Hussein (a)

3. Ali Akbar's (a) handsome physical appearance was matched by his equally handsome deeds. Some of these were:

    a. His nobility of character and generosity
    b. His sense of duty and love of justice
    c. His youth
    d. Both (a) and (b)

4. The representatives of the people of Medina did not want

    a. Imam Hussein (a) and Ali Akbar (a) to leave Medina
    b. Imam Hussein (a) to refuse Bay 'at
    c. Any youth to leave Medina
    d. Imam Hussein (a) to lose his son in Kerbala

5. Imam Hussein (a) told Ali Akbar (a) to get permission to go to battle from Zainab (a) because:

    a. She was the oldest Aunt Ali Akbar (a) had
    b. Ali Akbar's (a) mother was in Medina
    c. Zainab (a) decided who could go to the battlefield
    d. None of the above

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Short essay question:

In 2 or 3 paragraphs write down what happened after Ali Akbar (a) went to the battlefield. Be sure to include the emotions of Imam Hussein (a). For a moment reflect on your own relationship with your father. Write down a few sentences about why you think Imam Hussein (a) let his own son go to die.

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Chapter 18: Abbas Ibn Ali Ibn Abu Talib (a)

Imam Zain ul-Abideen (a) has said:

> *"Allah may have mercy upon my uncle, al-Abbas. He preferred his brother to himself, did well, and sacrificed himself for his brother until he lost his two hands for sake of such."*

Imam as-Sadiq (a) has said:

> *"My uncle al-Abbas was clear-sighted, steadfastly faithful…"*

Imam al-Mahdi (a) said:

> *"Salaam be upon Abul-Fadhlil Abbas, son of Amir ul-Mu'mineen. He preferred his brother to himself, supplied himself with (opportunities of) today for (rewards of) tomorrow, sacrificed himself for his brother, protected him, hurried for fetching him water, and his two hands were cut (for such)."*

Al-Abbas, after all, was the righteous servant of God and the epitome of heroism.

18.1 Pure lineage

Undoubtedly, to have relations with great personalities is an honor and dignity, especially when such great personality is the choice of God and the seal of the prophets. Al-Abbas ibn Ali (a) was the son of Ali ibn Abi-Talib (a) who was an independent source of honor and dignity. Al-Abbas (a) had every right to take pride in him and learn from his morals, ethics, and excellences. He learnt values like courage, patience, faith, and loyalty from his father.

Like fathers, uncles play a good role in the structure of personalities. The paternal uncles of, al-Abbas (a), were such unique personalities whose lives and situations have been matters of pride for humanity in general and Islam in particular

From the maternal side, al-Abbas (a) was the son of a great lady; namely Umm-ul-Banin, from the tribe of Kelab who enjoyed excellent lineage and personality. Umm-ul-Banin belonged to one of the most celebrated families in fields of honor, openhandedness, nobility, courage, and bravery, because her forefathers had been the foremost among others in fields of heroism and courage.

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In addition to her high moral and ethical standards, she was well known of her loyalty to the Ahlul'Bait and her devoutness. Therefore, she occupied an elevated position in the sight of the Ahlul'Bait who praised her in many occasions and showed her great respect. This great lady gave birth of four courageous sons, Al-Abbas, Abdullah, Ja'far, and Uthman, the elder being Abul-Fadhlil Abbas (a). He, as well as his brothers, acquired the qualities of courage and bravery from their mother as well as their father.

Some historians have confirmed that al-Abbas (a) was born on the fourth of Sha'ban, AH 26.

18.2 Childhood and Upbringing

It is narrated that, once, Imam Ali (a) seated his baby al-Abbas (a) on his knees, lifted his (the baby's) hands, kissed them, and wept. Watching this situation, the mother was astonished; hence, Imam Ali (a) foretold her about the future of her baby and what would happen to his hands. She, as well as the others, wept heavily. After that, the Imam told her about her baby's great position with God, and this relieved her.

Al-Abbas (a) adhered to his father since he was in Medina, and when he moved to Iraq and resided in Kufa, al-Abbas (a) was also under his thoughtful care and wise education. By heredity, education, and environment, al-Abbas (a) acquired all virtues, high moral standards, knowledge, and conversance.

After his father's demise, al-Abbas adhered closely to his two brothers; al-Hassan (a) and al-Hussein (a). He returned with them to Medina and learnt from them the religious knowledge and fundamentals in addition to the nobilities of character.

When Imam al-Hassan (a) was poisoned to death, al-Abbas (a) adhered to his brother Imam al-Hussein (a) and his nephew Imam Ali Zain ul Abideen (a). He kept himself with his brother in Medina, Mecca, and Iraq where he protected him until he lost his life for this sake.

Thus, al-Abbas (a) had the characteristic of full adherence to his father, two brothers, and nephew. From that reason, he was a true copy of the Imams in knowledge and morality.

Al-Abbas (a) was also the brother of Zainab al-Kubra (a), daughter of Fatemah az-Zahra (s). She was older than al-Abbas (a). Like her mother, Zainab (a) was the best example of glory, honor, and perseverance on principles; therefore, she contributes strongly in erecting the ideal human society. Al-Abbas (a) engaged himself with her guardianship during the tragic journey to Kerbala.

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It is now not odd for, al-Abbas (a), to hold all the mental virtues in his unparalleled personality, since his forefathers, father, mother, brothers, and sisters were all models of human perfection.

Muhammad ibn al-Hanafiyya is another brother from whom al-Abbas (a) learnt courage plus horsemanship and eloquence. During the battle of Siffeen, Imam Ali (a) regarded his son Muhammad as his hand.

18.3 Name and Titles of Abbas Ibn Ali (a)

Following are the meanings of his name and titles.

18.3.1 Al-Abbas

Referring to the linguistic meaning of the Arabic al-Abbas (a), Ibn-Manzhour, in his *al-Ayn*, writes down:

Al-Abbas: the lion that other lions fear and escape.

In *Muntaha al-Irab*, the following is recorded:

Al-Abbas: this name is called on the courageous, the fearless, the strong, and the attacker. It is one of the names of the lion.

Describing al-Abbas (a) in the battlefields, many historians have likened him to the angry lion. At-Turaihi, in his al-Muntakhab, says:

Al-Abbas ibn Ali (a) looked like an unshakable mountain. His heart was as same as a mound because he was such a unique horseman and hero. In battlefields, he was fearless.

Other names of Al-Abbas

18.3.2 Abu'l-Fadhl

Al-Abbas (a) was called Abul Fadhlil (father -or owner- of virtue). Some mentioned that he had a son called al-Fadhl. As a matter of fact, this name represents his personality completely, because he was the owner, leader, and source of virtue. In his life, he was so openhanded-he used to distribute his virtue and charity on everyone who directed to him. After martyrdom, he is the shelter and refuge of everyone who seeks his help.

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18.3.3 Abu-Qirba

Al-Abbas (a) was also called Abu-Qirba (the owner of the skin of water) because he carried water to the harem of Imam al-Hussein (a) during the battle of at-Taff.

18.3.4 Abu'l-Qasim

He was also called Abul-Qasim. This name, however, is not common among historians some of whom have mentioned that al-Abbas had a son called al-Qasim and was martyred during the battle of at-Taff. Jabir al-Ansari addressed to al-Abbas (a) during the Ziyara of al-Arbaeen:

"Salaam be upon you, Abul-Qasim. Salaam be upon you, al-Abbas ibn Ali."

Undoubtedly, Jabir was that great personality who spent much of his time in the house of prophecy and Imamate; therefore, he was more knowledgeable than others in the secrets, affairs, and news of this holy house.[54]

18.3.5 Qamar Bani Hashim

Al-Abbas (a) was so bright-faced and handsome. Hence, he was called 'Qamar Bani Hashim - Moon of the Hashimites.' He was also the moon of his family and the moon of Islam because he paved the path of martyrdom with light and shone upon the lives of Muslims.
He was so bright-faced that the light of his countenance lit all darkness and everybody admired his handsomeness. When al-Abbas (a) was accompanied by his nephew Ali Akbar (a), known of his similarity to the Prophet physically and morally, people of Medina used to stop in lines to watch their physical stature.

18.3.6 As-Saqqaa

During the stay of Imam Hussein (a) and his household in Kerbala al-Abbas, undertook the mission of fetching water his brother's camp. On that account, he had the epithet 'as-Saqqaa - the provider of water.'
From his forefathers, al-Abbas (a) inherited the mission of serving water. Other than the other Koreishite clans, the Hashemites exclusively undertook the mission of serving water for the unparalleled qualities of generosity and honor that they enjoyed.
Historians have recorded that Qusay ibn Kelab was the foremost to serve water to the pilgrims of the Sacred House of God in Mecca. After him, his son Abd-Menaf inherited this mission and

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left it to his son Hashim who, too, left it to his son Abd-ul-Muttalib. After Abd-ul-Muttalib, Abu-Talib undertook this mission then handed it over to his brother al-Abbas ibn Abd-ul-Muttalib. On the day of the conquest of Mecca, al-Abbas offered this mission to the Prophet (s) who gave it back to him.
Furthermore, history is full of narrations, mentioning that the Prophet (s) served water to his companions in many occasions before and after prophesy. Imam Ali Amir ul-Mu'mineen (a), also, served the Muslim army with water at that night before the day of the Battle of Badr. On the day of the Hudaybiyyah Treaty, Imam Ali served the Prophet and Muslims with water. When Uthman ibn Affan was blockaded at his house, Imam Ali ordered his sons to send him water.

Finally, during the battle of Siffeen Imam Ali (a) allowed the other party to drink from the water which was under his control although Muawiyah prevented Imam Ali's (a) army from reaching the river when he, first, had controlled it.
Like their father, Imams al-Hassan (a) and al-Hussein (a) supplicated to God for rain for people of Kufa when they were afflicted by draught. Because of the Imams' supplication, the city of Kufa was watered with heavy rain that regained life to it.
After all, history has not forgotten the situation when Imam al-Hussein, after he had left Medina and Mecca and directed towards Kufa, served water to people of Iraq:
At the last hours of that night, Imam al-Hussein (a) ordered his servants to fetch water as much as possible. They did although they did not know the reason. In their way, the caravan of the Imam met the army headed by al-Hurr ibn Yazeed and they were intolerably thirsty under the heat of that sun and the iron of their military uniform. Only then did the servants of Imam al-Hussein know the reason why their master had asked them to take water as much as possible. Then, the Imam (a) ordered, "Serve them with water and give their horses some."
Like his fathers and two brothers, al-Abbas ibn Ali (a) assumed to himself the mission of serving water and he was completely worthy of it. On every occasion and every opportunity he could seize, al-Abbas (a) served the others with water, until the blockade imposed by Ubaydallah ibn Ziyad.

When Imam al-Hussein's (a) camp lost many of the individuals and seemed to be losing the battle, the Imam shouted, "Is there not any helper who may help us? Is there not any one who may guard the harem of Allah's Messenger?"
Hearing these words from his brother, al-Abbas approached to his brother, kissed him on the face, and asked for permission for fighting. The Imam did not permit him, but he ordered him to fetch some water for the women and children.

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18.3.7 Battal ul-Alqami

Al-Alqami is the name of the river on whose bank was the last scene of the life of al-Abbas. This river was gathered around by big numbers of soldiers whose mission was to prevent the camp of Imam al-Hussein (a) from water. By his giant determination and unmatched heroism, al-Abbas could attack that army and occupy the river until he was martyred there. Hence, he was called 'Battal ul-Alqami -the hero of al-Alqami.'

18.3.8 Hamil ul-Liwaa

The holding of standards in wars was the most significant position in armies. Standards are given exclusively to the soldiers who enjoy special military abilities. During the battle of at-Taff, the standard was in the hand of Abul-Fadhlil Abbas (a) who preserved and held it since the beginning of the tragic journey in Medina until the last spark of his life. He protected that standard so bravely and uniquely that he embraced it to his chest when his two hands were severed. In more than one situation, al-Abbas (a) asked his brother Imam al-Hussein (a) for permission for fighting, but the Imam used to say to him, "You are the standard-bearer of my army. If you are martyred, my troops will separate.

It is also well known that standard-bearers are chosen according to special qualifications:
The standard-bearer must be accepted by everybody and must bear qualities such as courage, chivalry, and honor.
The standard-bearers, too, must exert all efforts for sake of keeping the standard high. From this reason, al-Abbas (a) exerted unique efforts to keep the standard high. When his right hand was severed, he held the standard in the left, and when this one was also severed, he embraced the standard to his chest and kept it to the last breath of his life.

Historians have also recorded that when the Umayyad army raided at the camp of Imam al-Hussein (a) -after his martyrdom-, they robbed everything including the standard, which was borne by al-Abbas (a). In Syria, Yazeed's sight fell on that standard that amazed him. He noticed that it was completely stabbed except at its handle, from which it was carried and said, "Look at this standard! It is stabbed in every place except its handle. This clearly means that its bearer was so courageous and chivalrous that he faced all stabs and strokes without letting that standard fall from his hand. This is the true loyalty to brothers!!"

18.3.9 Kebsh ul-Kateeba

This title is exclusively given to the higher commander whose mission is to protect and manage his troops. Hence, this title was conferred upon al-Abbas for his unique courage and

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bravery during the battle of at-Taff when he protected and guarded the camp of Imam al-Hussein (a). In fact, the Umayyad army, including their commanders, feared al-Abbas (a); therefore, they offered many seductive offers, such as the general commandment of the army, provided that he would leave the wing of Imam al-Hussein (a) and join theirs.

By the martyrdom of al-Abbas (a), the eyes of his enemies, which could not see rest so long as he was there, became delighted, while the eyes of Imam al-Hussein's (a) camp and children, which was tranquil and delighted so long as they could see al-Abbas (a) protecting them, lost rest forever.

18.3.10 Al-Ameed

This title is also addressed to the lofty military personalities. It was conferred upon al-Abbas (a) because he played the role of the support and commander of his brother's army.

18.3.11 Bab ul-Hawaaij

People believed that God would surely settle the needs of him who implores to Him by seeking the intercession of al-Abbas for the special rank that he enjoys in the sight of Almighty God and for dedicating himself to the obedience to Imam al-Hussein (a). Hence, al-Abbas (a) is called 'Bab ul-Hawaaij -the door to the settlement of needs.'

18.3.12 Ash-Shahid

Although this means 'the martyr', is not very famous among the other epithets of al-Abbas (a), it is mentioned in the statements of Abul-Hassan al-Umari and Abu-Nasr al-Bukhari when they refer to the biography of al-Abbas ibn Ali. Abu-Nasr refers to a narration in which Imam as-Sadiq (a) calls al-Abbas as 'ash-Shahid':

Muawiyah ibn Ammar al-Yazidi narrated:
I asked as-Sadiq (a) how they divided the donation of Fadak when it had been given back to them. He answered: "We gave the descendants of al-Abbas ash-Shahid -the martyr- a quarter and took the rest for ourselves."

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18.3.13 Al-Abd us-Salih

Al-Abd us-Salih refers to the righteous servant (of God). In the Special Ziyara of al-Abbas (a) that Abu-Hamzah ath-Themali related, Imam as-Sadiq (a) says:

"Salaam be upon you, the righteous servant!"

In the Holy Qur'an, God describes His prophets, including Prophet Muhammad (s) as righteous servants.

18.3.14 Al-Aabid

Al-Abbas (a) was also called 'al-Aabid -the worshipper, for his distinctive worship to the Lord. Undoubtedly, it is natural that al-Abbas (a), being brought up in the center of the genuine worship, which is the house of the chief of the worshippers; Imam Ali Amir ul-Mu'mineen (a), acquires the quality of worshipfulness superiorly. As-Saduq, in his Thawaab ul-A'maal, records that al-Abbas ibn Ali (a) was described as having the sign of prostration on his forehead. Obedience is attached to pure worship and al-Abbas (a) was described by Imam as-Sadiq (a) as obedient. In the Ziarat by Imam as-Sadiq (a) during his visit to the tomb of Abu'l-Fadhl al-Abbas (a), the following statement is addressed to al-Abbas (a):

"Salaam be upon you; the righteous servant (of God), the obedient to Allah, His Messenger, Amir ul-Mu'minin, al-Hasan, and al-Hussein, peace and greetings of Allah be upon them."

18.3.15 Bab Ul-Hussein

Like his father who was the door to the Prophet (s), al-Abbas (a) is the actual and spiritual door to Imam al-Hussein (a). Because of the high moral standards and great faithfulness of al-Abbas, Imam al-Hussein (a) used to choose him for every mission and depend upon him in every difficult situation. Likewise, al-Abbas (a) dedicated himself to being at the disposal of his brother. He was the protector and defender of the Prophet's household.
It is related that al-Abbas (a) used to call his brother by 'Sir.' Only on one day and in one situation did al-Abbas (a) call his brother by 'brother.' That was on the day of Ashura when he fell down from his horse after his two hands had been severed and he had been stricken on the head. In such an hour, a man longs for seeing the ones he loves for the last time. Only then he shouted as aloud as possible, 'O brother, reach your brother!'

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As soon as the Imam heard that voice, he hurried towards its source. He rode off, put his brother's head in his lap, began to wipe out blood and dust from the face, and asked about his pains. Al-Abbas (a) opened his sights in his brother's face, looked at him for the last time, and bid him farewell with a smile expressing all meanings of sincerity and loyalty.

As an answer, Imam al-Hussein (a) replied his brother's farewell not with words, but with tears that dropped on the face of al-Abbas while he was in his last sparks of life. Thus, al-Abbas (a) emitted his last breaths while he was in the lap of his brother and has become the door to him.

Hence, it is recommended for the pilgrims of the tomb of Imam al-Hussein (a) to begin first with visiting the tomb of al-Abbas (a). This is one of the confirmations that al-Abbas is door to his brother; chief of the martyrs. The door intended here is mental and spiritual. Al-Abbas, hence, is the spiritual door to Imam al-Hussein (a).

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18.4 Worksheet: Abbas Ibn Ali Ibn Abu Talib (a)

Fill in the blanks:

1. The father of Al-Abbas (a) was _____.
2. Al-Abbas (a) was the son of a great lady; named_____ from the tribe of Kelab.
3. Umm-ul-Banin belonged to one of the most celebrated families in fields of _____, openhandedness, _____, courage, and _____.
4. Umm-ul-Banin had four sons Al-Abbas, _____, _____, and _____.
5. _____ waqs the oldest of Umm-ul-Banin's sons.
6. Al- Abbas (a) held all the mental virtues in his unparalleled personality, due to all models of human perfection under whose guidance he grew up with. These were his parents, and _____, _____, _____, _____.

Choose the correct answer:

1. Ibn-Manzhour describes the linguistic meaning of the Arabic al-Abbas to be:
    a. The lion that other lions fear and escape
    b. The person that serves everyone water
    c. The person that submits only to Allah
    d. The giver of knowledge
2. Qamar-e- Bani Hashim means:
    a. The lion that other lions fear and escape
    b. Moon of the Hashemites
    c. The person that submits only to Allah
    d. None of the above
3. As- Saqqaa means:

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a. The provider of water

b. The provider of peace

c. The courageous fighter

d. All of the above

4. Al-Abbas (a) is referred to as Bab ul-Hawaaij because:

    a. For the special rank that he enjoys for being the provider of peace

    b. That is the name given to him by his mother

    c. For the special rank that he enjoys in the sight of Almighty God for dedicating himself to the obedience to Imam al-Hussein (a)

    d. a) and b)

Short essay question:

In a couple of paragraphs write down four names of Al-Abbas (a) apart from the ones mentioned above and describe what they meant and why they were given to Al-Abbas (a).

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Appendix A: Important Personalities to Remember

18.5 Abu Talib

Abu Talib was the son of Abdul Muttalib. He is the uncle of Holy Prophet (S) and Father of Imam Ali (A). His family was responsible for looking after the Kaaba. After his father's death Abu Talib became the Amir of Mecca and the trustee of Kaaba. Like his father Abu Talib (A.S.) too took upon himself the duty of being the host of the pilgrims of Kaaba. He became so popular that the Arabs began to call him "The leader of the Land".

Apart from being the trustee of Kaaba, Allah bestowed upon Abu Talib (A) the honor of being the guardian of the Prophet (S). He took the Holy Prophet in his care after his mother Amina and grandfather Abdul Muttalib died. Abu Talib (A) looked after Muhammad (S) for forty-two years. The Prophet (S) often remembering Abu Talib (A) said nobody dared to harm me as long as my uncle Abu Talib (A) lived.

18.6 Abdul Muttalib

Abu Muttalib is the grandfather of the Holy Prophet. He was the guardian of Holy Prophet and when Holy Prophet's mother died at the age of six he took the Prophet in his care. He also died when the Holy Prophet turned eight.

18.7 Abu Sufiyan

Abu Sufiyan was the father of Muawiyah and was from Quraish. When the Holy Prophet declared his mission, Abu Sufiyan became extremely hostile toward the Holy Prophet and Islam. He led the Quraish army against the Muslims in the battles of Uhud and the Trench. Even his descendents especially his son Muawiyah, were also against the Holy Prophet and his kin.

It was only after the conquest of Mecca by the Muslims that Abu Sufiyan and his family including Muawiyah submitted to Islam.

18.8 Hamzah

Hamzah is the uncle of the Holy Prophet (S). Hamzah won the badge of honor from his nephew, Prophet Muhammad (S) who named him, 'Asadulllah wa asadu Rasoulih -the lion of Allah and the lion of His Messenger-', for his unique bravery and courage. He defended Islam fearlessly until he was killed during the battle of Uhud. Hence, the Prophet (s) named him as 'chief of martyrs.' Moreover, many narrations confirm that Hamzah had considerable knowledge and outstanding rank in the sight of Allah.

18.9 Aqeel

Aqeel was the son of Abu- Talib, cousin of the Holy Prophet and brother of Imam Ali. He embraced Islam from the beginning; therefore, the Prophet (s) had great love for him:

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"I love you twice-once for your being Aqil and the other for Abu-Talib's love for you.

18.10 Khalid Bin Al-Walid

Khalid Bin Walid was a late converter of Islam. He was a warrior and a skilled swordsman.

18.11 Ossama

Ossama was a courageous young man. He was 17 years old when Prophet Mohammed appointed him to lead an expedition to Syria. Some old companions were very upset at that appointment.

18.12 Sa'ad Bin Abada

Sa'ad Bin Abada was a famous leader of the Ansars, the leader of the Khazraj. He was also a candidate for the Caliphate after the death of the Holy Prophet (S.A.W) at the gathering of Saqifa against Abu Bakr.

18.13 Ammar Bin Yasir

Ammar ibn Yasir was one of the earliest converts to Islam. The pagans in Makkah tortured his mother and father to death. They were the first and the second martyrs of Islam, and this is a distinction that no one in all Islam can share with them. Prophet Muhammad once said: "Ammar is the embodiment of all Eiman (Faith)". Ammar also became a good companion of Imam Ali.

18.14 Salman Al-Farsi

Salman Al-Farsi was a companion of Holy Prophet and was a true believer. The Holy Prophet (S) said about him that: Salman is one of us Ahlul Bait. Even before Islam Salman didn't believe in idols and he was searching for the true Prophet of Allah.

18.15 Al-Moqdad

Al-Moqdad was a good companion of the prophet and Imam Ali. He was one of a few who stood with Imam Ali after the Saqifa meeting.

18.16 Muawiyah

Muawiyah was the son of Abu Sufiyan and the father of Yazeed. His family was an archenemy of the Holy Prophet. They accepted Islam only after the conquest of Mecca. The Caliph Umar appointed him as the Governor of Syria. As the Governor of Syria he tried to win the hearts of the people by gifts and concessions. After Imam Ali election as the Caliph, he deposed Muawiyah from the governorship of Syria. Muawiyah did not accept the orders of Ali and refused to vacate office. Then, he gathered a large army to fight Imam Ali.

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18.17 Talha

Talha belonged to the Taym section of Quraish. He was closely related to Abu Bakr. He became a Muslim at the young age of fifteen, and was among the early Muslim converts. After the assassination of Othman, Imam Ali became the Caliph. Talha and Zubayr took the allegiance to Ali, but soon they repudiated such allegiance and supported the demand for vengeance for the blood of Othman. Talha, Zubayr, and Ayesha occupied Basra and the battle of the Camel was fought between the supporters of Ali, and the supporters of Talha, Zubayr, and Ayesha outside Basra. In this battle, Ali won and the cause of Talha and Zubayr was lost.

18.18 Al-Zubayr

He was a companion of Holy Prophet. Later in his life, he became greedy for wealth. He gave his pledge to Imam Ali (As), but later on he changed his mind because Imam Ali did not make him a governor of a country. He was also the brother-in-law of Ayesha. He confronted Imam Ali in the battle of camel along with Ayesha.

18.19 Umm Al-Banin

After the death of daughter (Bibi Syeda) of the Prophet, when Imam Ali wanted to re-marry. He asked his brother Aqeel to find him a lady who was from a noble, pious and courageous family, so that with her they could have a loyal son that would serve the cause of Islam. For this reason, he married Fatemah (better known as Umm al-Banin), and they had a child, namely Abu Fadhlil Abbas. She was a very pious lady and raised her children in such a way that they treated themselves as secondary and servants of the children of Imam Ali (a) and Bibi Syeda (a).

18.20 Malik Al-Ashtar

Malik belonged to an old Yemeni tribe. He became a Muslim in the time of the Prophet [s]. He was very loyal to his Islam. He took part and fought bravely in the Battle of Yarmook. He had brave attitudes in stopping the Romans' attacks against the Muslim Army. So, his eye was split by a sword, namely, its lower lid was split. Thus, he was called al-Ashtar. He was also a companion of Imam Ali and fought against Muawiyah.

18.21 Amr Bin Al-A'hss

Amr Bin Al-A'hss was a shrewd politician and was a man of little morals. He was Muawiyah's advisor. He helped Muawiyah a great deal in Siffeen by tricking a lot of Imam Ali's followers.

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18.22 Abu Mussa Al-Asha'rry

He was a simple and naïve man. Although Imam Ali disagreed, Abu Mussa was chosen to represent Imam Ali's side for peace talks in Siffeen. He then was tricked and humiliated by Amr Bin Al-A'hss.

18.23 Mohammed Bin Abi Bakr

He was the son of Abu Bakr and was a good companion of Imam Ali's. he was killed by Muawiyah's agents. He was a good follower to the extent that Imam Ali (AS) once said: Mohammed (Bin Abi Bakr) was to me like I was to Mohammed (S).

18.24 Abu Thar

Abu Thar was a good companion of the Holy Prophet and loved him very much. He was a true believer of Islam. His real name was Jundub bin Junadah. He was an early convert and contributed in spreading Islam. He was very ascetic. He could not stand the behavior of the 3rd Caliph.

18.25 Marwan Bin Al-Hakam

He and his father were corrupted people. He was the secretary of the 3rd Caliph. He later was a loyal follower of Yazeed. Marwan was the one who asked the governor of al-Medina to kill Imam Hussein (a) if he did not pledge to Yazeed.

18.26 Kumail

His name was Kumail bin Zyyad al-Nakhay. He came from Yemen. He was one of Imam Ali's (a) companions. He was a noble man and his people obeyed him. His family inhabited Kufa during Imam Ali's Caliphate.

Imam Ali has taught him a supplication, now known as Kumail's supplication, and asked him to read it on Thursday nights. Nowadays, millions of Moslems read this Kumail's supplication.

18.27 Maitham Al-Tammar

Maitham was born at Nahrawan near Kufa. A woman from bani Assad bought him. One day, Imam Ali (A) bought and gave him his freedom. Maitham became free. He sold dates in Kufa Market. Maitham lived a simple life. Two things grew in his heart: faith in Islam and love for Imam Ali (A). Imam Ali (A) taught him that Islam was the only way to freedom.

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Appendix B: Sayings to Remember

Selected sayings of Prophet Muhammad (p) and Imam Ali (a) that had a historical value and told us something about the circumstances and the situation of that period of time.

"Ask me before you lose me"

"That (the leader) who is not obeyed has no authority"

"I am the city of knowledge and Ali is its gate"

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Appendix C: History Review Questions

1. What is Imam Ali (AS) birth date? Where was his birthplace?

2. Hijrah of Prophet Muhammad (S) from Mecca to Medina started with a heroic sacrifice by Imam Ali (AS). What was the sacrifice?

3. After the Muslims entered Mecca, how was the top of the Kaaba cleaned out from idols?

4. What were the achievements of Imam Ali (AS) in Badr?

5. At the end of the battle of Uhud, people heard a very loud shout coming from the skies. Who was that? And what did he say?

6. Three major events took place when the Allies came to invade Medina in what is known as the battle of the Allies or the battle of the Trench. What were these three events? Hint: trench, the challenge, wind.

7. Whose idea was it to dig a trench at the border of Medina when Quraish and its allies came to invade Medina?

8. What words did Prophet Muhammad (S) utter when Imam Ali (AS) went to challenge Amr bin Abd Wed in the battle of the trench?

9. Prophet Muhammad (S) said that He is leaving us with two valuable things. What are they?

10. About how many people attended the event of Ghadeer Khum? 1,000 ; 10,000 100,000.

11. What were the major announcements of the day of Ghadeer?

12. What is the significance of the day of Ghadeer?

13. Who were the two debating groups in the Saqifa meeting? And why didn't Imam Ali (A) attend the meeting of Saqifa?

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14. The Ansar were two major tribes. What are they? How was their relationship before Islam?

15. How did the Muhajiroon succeed in bringing the Ansar to accept Abu Bakr as a Caliph?

16. Who were the only three companions of Imam Ali's (A) that were ready to help him right after the event of Saqifa?

17. How did Lady Fatemah (S) own the Fadak property? Why did Abu Bakr contest it from Her?

18. Why did Imam Ali (A) burry Lady Fatemah (S) secretly at night?

19. What did Imam Ali (A) do during the first six months after the demise of the Prophet (S)?

20. Why did Imam Ali (A) help the 2nd and 3rd Caliphs although they took his right? How did he help?

21. What was the famous statement the 2nd Caliph Umar repeated, more than 70 times, regarding Imam Ali's (A) help to him?

22. During the ruling of which Caliph Persia, Egypt and Syria became Muslim states?

23. Just before he died, Umar nominated six people, one of whom would become his successor. Name at least four of the six.

24. Imam Ali (A) would have become the 3rd Caliph if he had agreed to a condition that was presented to him. What was that condition?

25. Why did Imam Ali (A) accept pledging his loyalty to the three Caliphs before him?

26. What did Othman do that led his leadership to crumble at the end?

27. Name some personalities that instigated against Othman. Name some that tried to protect him.

28. Why did Talha and Zubayr turn against Imam Ali (A), even after declaring their loyalty?

29. Name the three groups that fought Imam Ali (A) during his ruling period. Name the associated battles.

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30. Why did Imam Ali (A) transfer the government headquarters from Medina to Kufa?

31. How did Imam Ali (A) deal with the corrupt governors that were appointed by Othman?

32. What did Imam Ali (A) say about the issue of the money and wealth of the Muslims that were taken illegally during Othman's period?

33. When he became the Caliph, what was the single major financial move that Imam Ali (A) did in order to improve the economy and help the poor?

34. Why did Ayesha revolt against Imam Ali (A)?

35. Who influenced Ayesha's decision to fight Imam Ali (A)?

36. Ayesha tried to convince Umm-Salama (R) to support her against Imam Ali (AS). What was Umm-Salama's reaction?

37. How did Imam Ali (AS) try to prevent the war of Jamal from happening, just before it started?

38. What was so bad about the battle of Jamal, even though Imam Ali's (A) army won?

39. After the camel of Ayesha fell on the battlefield, whom did Imam Ali (A) send to protect Ayesha?

40. After the battle of Jamal was over, how did Imam Ali (A) send Ayesha back to Mecca?

41. What was the major verse of the Qur'an that Ayesha violated by leading an army?

42. Why did Muawiyah want to fight Imam Ali (A)?

43. Why didn't Imam Ali (A) do any expansion or send expeditions to new lands?

44. Name as many good companions of Imam Ali's (AS) as you can. Name as many foes of his as you can.

45. After the army of Imam Ali (AS) was winning in Siffeen, what was the single event that confused the situation and turned things around?

46. What did the Kharijites want Imam Ali (A) to do?

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47. The Kharijites were about 12,000 at the beginning. How did Imam Ali (A) deal with them at first? How many insisted on staying as Kharijites?

48. Who assassinated Imam Ali (A)? Which group did he belong to? What was the date?

49. Where is the tomb of Imam Ali (A)?

50. The sayings and speeches of Imam Ali (A) were assembled in a book called …?

51. In one speech Imam Ali (A) called his followers “Oh you who look like men but are not men….. you filled my heart with agony”. Why?

52. Once Imam Ali (A) said, “If I had wanted to plot and deceive, I would have been the trickiest of all Arabs”. What was this saying about?

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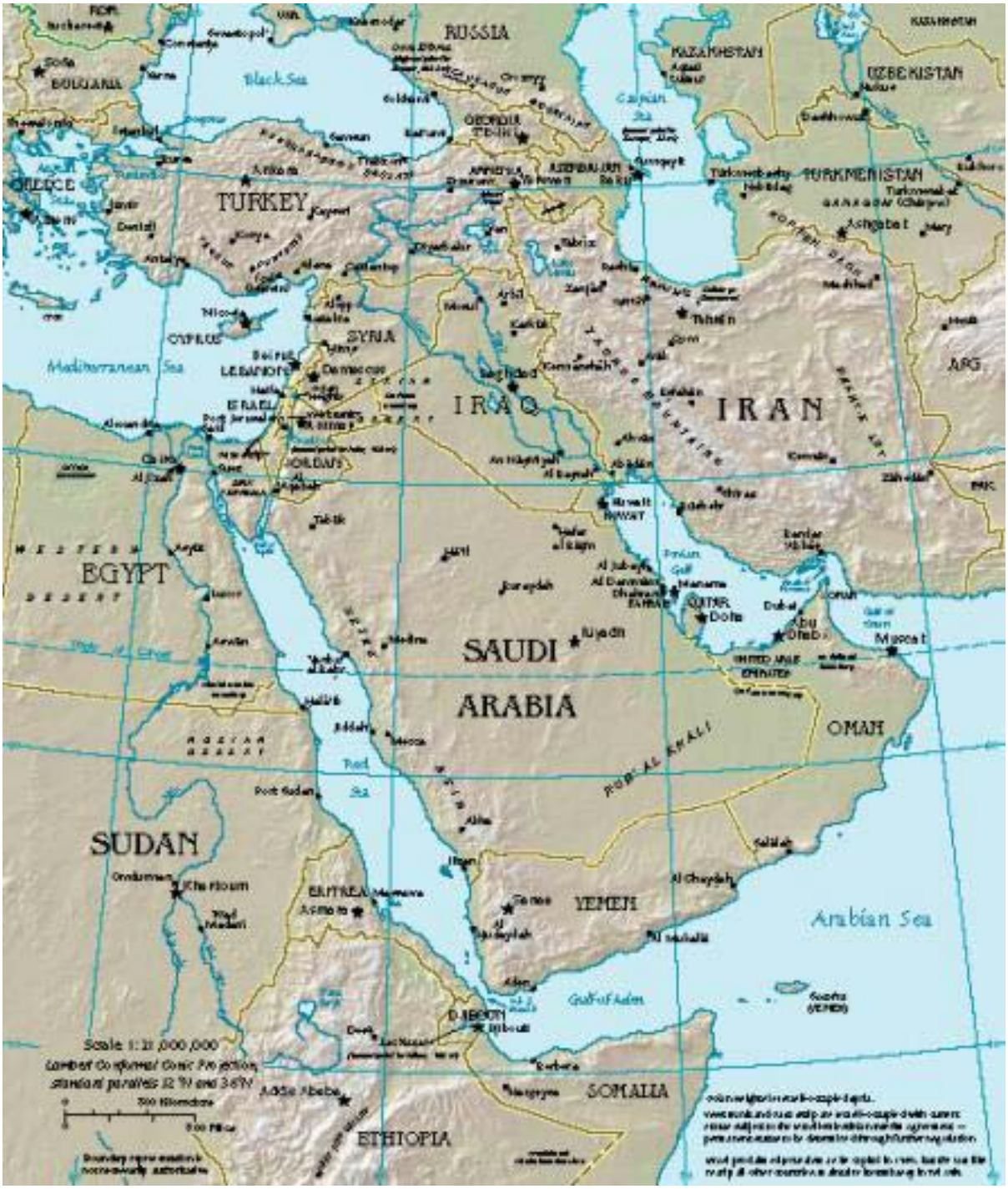
Appendix D: Maps



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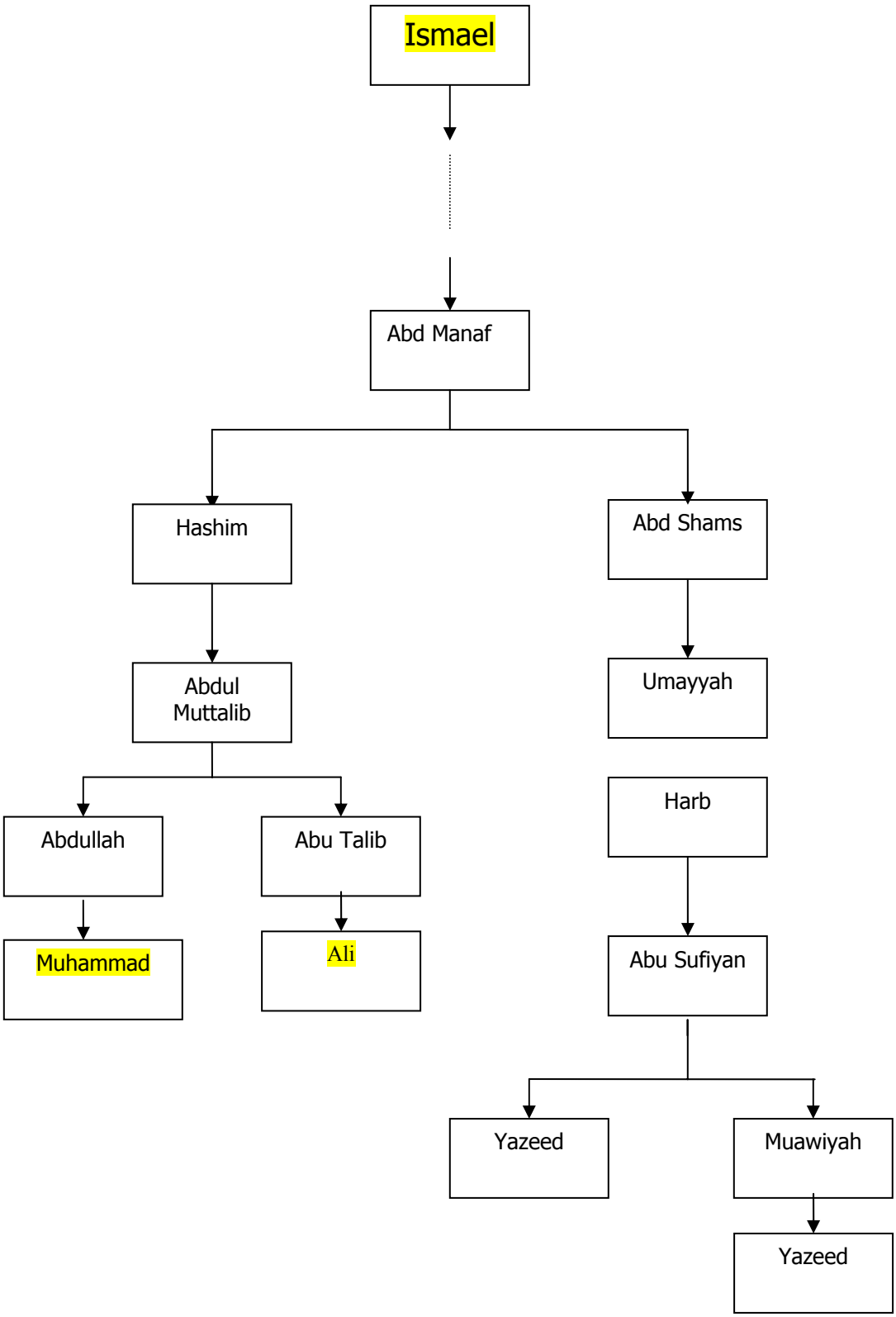
Appendix E: Genealogy Chart



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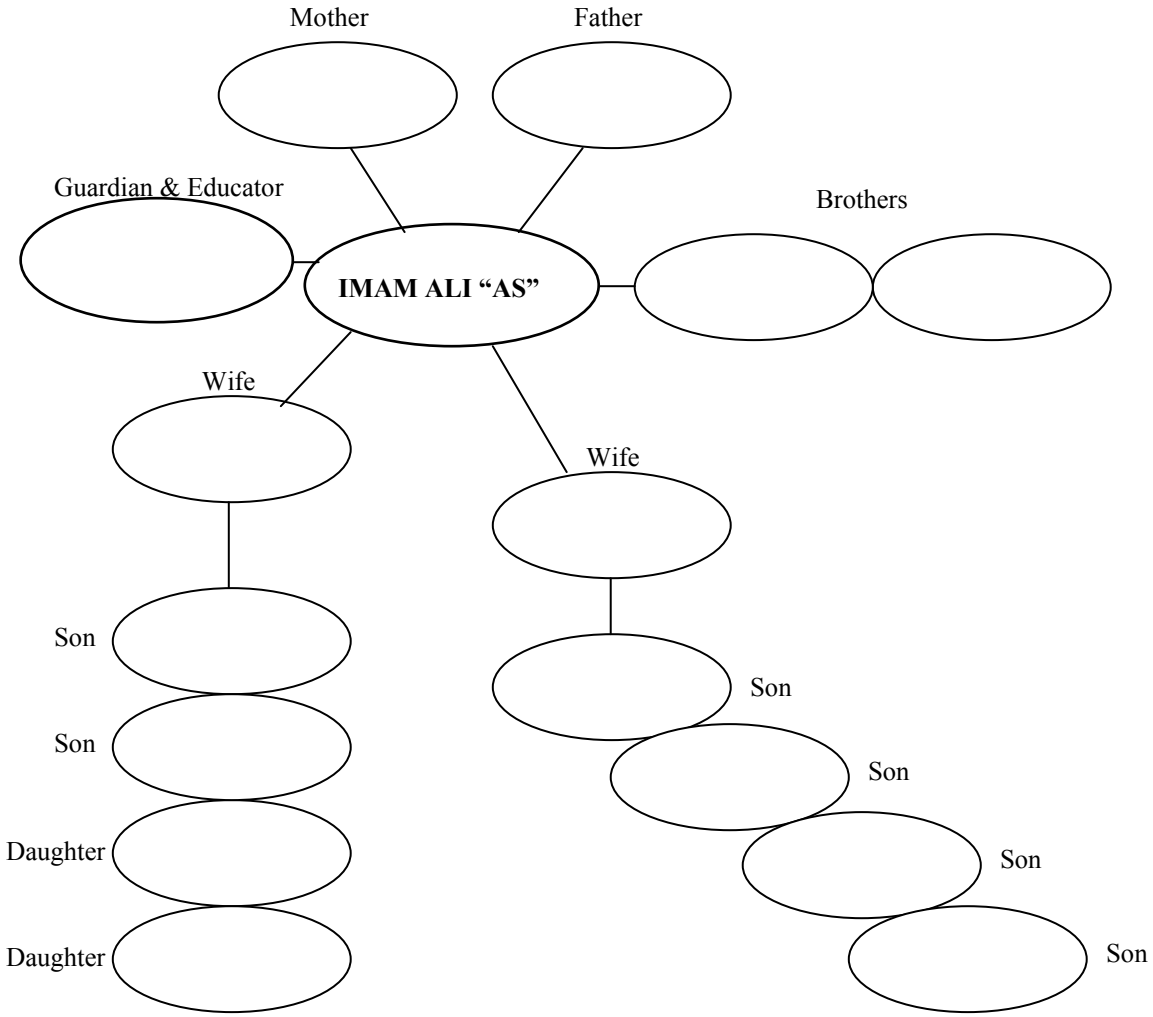

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